Be Still and Know
Fr. Paul Varghese

Madras: CLS/Delhi: ISPCK/Lucknow: The Lucknow Publishing House, 1974.

CONTENTS

The first and last of these were retreat addresses given at Westcott House, Cambridge, England. *Come, Holy Spirit* was a sermon preached on the Feast of Pentecost. The address on Renewal was delivered at the University of Geneva and the lecture on the Cultivation of the Christian Life was given at one of the Assemblies of the East Asia Christian Conference. *Lift the Shroud of Gloom* was a sermon preached at the chapel of the Ecumenical Centre, Geneva. The others were lectures given at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland.

BE STILL AND KNOW

'Be still, and know that I am God' (Ps. 46: 10). That is not our normal way of knowing. Though the methods of science demand an almost passive objectivity in the presence of that which we seek to know, it requires more of that restless quest and active experimentation that characterizes our urban-technological civilization. The goal of technology appears to be the mastery of the world, which calls for vigilance and struggle rather than quietness and passivity. The restlessness that characterizes our culture is surely more than the *consequence* of our loss of assurance. It seems to be, among other things, the *pre-condition* for technological advance and eventual domination of the environment. Neither science nor technology could have come out of sheer passivity.

Does the counsel of the Psalmist then have any validity for our time? Is not the very attempt to have a 'Quiet Day' a regress into passivity and a step backward in the progress of man? My theological colleagues on the Continent seem to have an aversion for the word 'Retreat' or 'Meditation', apparently because these engender passivity in a world where the demand on man is to be active and unresting.

This is a fear which goes much further back in our history than the Industrial Revolution. The fourteenth century controversy between Gregory Palamas, the Greek

Orthodox Hesychast and the Western Calabrian monk Barlaam over the effectiveness of 'hesychasm' or the method of quietness, already points to a long-existing cleavage in the ways of knowing God and of making statements about Him.

We are now living at a time and in a university world where there appears to be an insistence on the part of some Christians that there can be no fundamental difference between knowing God and knowing other persons and things. Statements about God are analysable on the same principles as statements of fact or descriptions of persons. This discursive approach to the knowledge of God has both its value and its peril. The value lies in the clearing away of some of the theological junk that has accumulated around the concept 'God' in recent centuries. The peril is that by including God among the objects of knowledge, we lose sight of that only true God who is without peer and who cannot be compared with anyone in the created order. This was the vision that turned Pascal away from 'the God of the Philosophers and Scholars' to the 'God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob'. And it is this latter God that the Psalmist exhorts his own soul to know in stillness. Any other God, who can be the object of our knowledge, must be an idol.

How then shall I dare to say something discursive about God? Especially reminded I am of the warning of St. Gregory Nazianzen in the 4th century:

Not to everyone, my friends, does it belong to philosophize about God—not to everyone; the subject is not so cheap and low; and, I will add, not before every

audience, nor at all times, nor on all points; but on certain occasions, and before certain persons, and within certain limits.

Not to all men, because it is permitted only to those who have been examined, and are past masters in meditation, and who have been previously cleansed in soul and body, or at the very least, are *being* cleansed. For the unclean to touch the clean is, we may safely say, not safe, just as it is unsafe to fix weak eyes upon the sun's rays.

And what is the permitted occasion? It is when we are free from all external defilement or disturbance, and when the ruling element in us is unmixed with vexatious and delusive imaginations. . . . For it is necessary to be in a genuine state of rest even to know God, and to discern Orthodox theology only when we can avail ourselves of the proper occasion.

And who are the permitted persons? They to whom the subject is of real concern, and not they who make it a matter of pleasant gossip, like any other topic, after the races, or the theatre, or a concert, or a dinner, or still lower employments. . .

(*Oratio* XXVII, PG. 36: 13C-16A).

Well, the fact that this passage says nothing about the expositor, gives me reason to believe that for St. Gregory at least, when one speaks of God, the speaker is on the same level with his listeners, requiring the same qualifications as are called for in them. I am no 'past master in meditation'. I certainly have not been cleansed in soul and body, except in so far as we have all been washed

with the water of regeneration in Baptism. I dare not even say that I am *being* cleansed, for judging by my own faulty standards, I can detect far more uncleanness in me today than I could ten years ago. It is unsafe for me then to look upon the pure glory of God in the present unclean state of my being.

Am I free from 'vexatious and delusory imaginations'? That is a state of mind beyond the ordinary competence of a church administrator. Even apart from that, such freedom can only be the outcome of a deep faith and a growth in spirit which I can at present only yearn for.

Then what is our justification for this exercise? Just this, that we are all concerned about God; for the simple and sinful reason that we have discovered that to be properly concerned about oneself requires being properly concerned about God. Even this long prologue is justified only by the fact that we need reminders of *our* creatureliness and *His* being beyond being and determination, when we so facilely speak of Him as if He were a topic among topics.

'Be at rest, and know that I am God.' The Hebrew word used here for 'be still' is *harpu* which means literally, let go, relax, abandon. The root-word *raphah* means 'to sink'. And this is precisely the sense in which one has to be still in order to know God.

It means first to cease striving, and secondly to suspend one's discursive or critical faculties, and thirdly to be free from anxiety.

To live, especially in our time, is to swim, and swim against the current. Theological students need no out-

side evidence for that. To cease to swim would mean automatically to sink. One cannot finish one's course without constant and ceaseless striving. To cease striving means death.

To be a student of theology and to suspend one's discursive or critical faculties, is the sort of thing one can do for a while when one is having a fling—even then one requires the aid of considerable quantities of alcohol to achieve that state of freedom from the faculty of critical judgment. To be an intelligent man means today to be in full possession of one's faculty of judgment. One holds oneself with a sharp and polished mind, as if it were a precision instrument in order to perceive reality, to separate sense from nonsense, and to clarify what really is, by attacking what is false. To suspend that faculty is to degenerate, to regress in the movement of biological evolution, to be less than a man. And yet this is what is required in order to know God.

To be free from anxiety—that is even harder. The conscious anxieties of a young person are limited and traceable. But there are many more inner uncertainties in our consciousness which are but vaguely perceived even by ourselves. To be liberated from them is part of what the Bible calls 'being still' or relaxing. We shall discuss this point at greater length when we come to discuss Faith.

Can we then know God at all? I would say it is very difficult. So few of those of us who are theologically trained can be said to know God, precisely because of our tendency to look upon Him as a subject for discursive study, and our inability to become like little children. and what is harder, still and quiet ones.

And yet speak about God we must. At least we must say in what ways we should not speak of God. We can no longer speak about Him as 'up there' or 'out there'. I do not know very much about the Diocese of Southwark, but I was under the impression that in most parts of the world intelligent and educated people had given up thinking about God in those terms some centuries ago. But can we now talk about God as being 'down here' or as 'the beyond in our midst'? Those of us who still use the language of physical elevation to refer to the exaltedness of God seldom mean 'up there' in any geographical sense. I trust that the Bishop of Woolwich's 'down here' is not intended in a geographical or anatomical sense either.

There are several ways of speaking about God, but none of them is really to be understood in the ordinary sense of the words. When Tillich says 'God does not exist, He simply is', he is saying something very profound, for which our languages are most inadequate. To exist is to occupy a point in time and space, and in that sense God does not exist. That is why the information that Colonel Yuri Gagarin brought back to us that he did not encounter God in space did not particularly shock or amuse us. But what do we really mean when we say that 'God is'? I do not think I am capable of conceptionally interpreting that brief statement. I do not certainly mean that 'there is an object of ultimate concern' or that there exists a Being called God. For Being itself is a category of determined existence, and God's Being is certainly not determined existence.

Martin Buber, to whom Tillich owes a great deal, in an essay on Hermann Cohen, makes the point that the

philosopher's great effort 'to sustain the object of his love as an object of his philosophic thought' has always failed and is bound to fail. It matters little how deeply the philosopher knows God and loves Him. God and the idea of God can never be related to each other as a thing and the idea of that thing. His being is, as Berdyaev puts it, *meontic* * Being, Being which is beyond being, Being which is non-being in a *mé-ontic* sense, Being which can never be reduced to 'the Beyond in our Midst'.

He is. He has known us and caused us to know Him. Is He a Person? O, I know not, for to say that God is Person is to put Him in a class. I know that He has acted in a personal way. He becomes a person to His other, whom He has made out of nothing. When the creation began to exist, in the beginning when time and space came to be, He chose to have this other *vis-a-vis* Him, and therefore we can think of Him as a Person. When man stood up on his two legs and began to address God in his own primitive, crude, groping but intensely personal way, then God was there to respond as a Person. But it was He who created the Human Person in His own image, and gave Him the possibility to respond to Him, to seek after Him, and perchance to find Him.

But man occupies space and time, unlike God. God occupies time-space only in so far as He took upon Himself the form and limitations of man. The Creation, of which time and space seem to be part, itself appears to

* *meontic* was distinguished from *oukontic*. The latter word means simply 'not existing', whereas the former means 'not yet come into determined existence', or potential Being.

exist in that time and space, at least from our human time-space perspective.

But why this created other of God? Why the Creation? Why Man? 'Absurd,' answer Camus and Kafka. 'Why are there *Seiende* (beings) rather than nothing? That is the question', is the promising beginning of Heidegger's epoch-making Freiburg lecture of 1935, but no answer has yet been proffered by the Sage of the Black Forest in these four decades. But he admitted even then that this was the broadest and deepest of questions. And my purport was to answer that question in a couple of paragraphs. But now when I approach it, I am terrified. Am I not being intellectually naïve and philosophically innocent when I seek so facilely to answer so profound a question?

I have one consolation however, and it lies in these words of Heidegger himself: 'Anyone for whom the Bible is divine revelation and truth has the answer to the question, "Why are there *Seiende* (beings) rather than nothing?" even before it is asked. Everything that is, except God Himself, has been created by Him. God Himself, the increate Creator, is.'

The creation is because He who is has chosen that it should be. He could have chosen otherwise. He can still will that that which is by His will, becomes nothing. And that is true of Man too.

'Man as man is an audacity of life', says the great Sage of Jerusalem, Martin Buber, 'undetermined and unfixed; he therefore requires confirmation'. That is a most profound statement about Man's tentative status. Man

partakes in the indeterminate being of God. But there is a basic difference between the two indeterminacies. God is undetermined in so far as He wills to be so, and His own being, if we may use that ambiguous term in an indeterminate sense, has its roots and sources in itself. Therefore it is not as wavering and anxious as our indeterminate being is; our being has an emptiness at bottom; we have to fill this in some way in order to feel our existence. The whole of human existence is the struggle to find the foundation on which we can establish that existence. We find many such foundations in the process of our experimentation. Our own bodies, the approval of others, our class or nationality, our wisdom and strength, our position in society, the groups to which we belong, these are, all in some way, places where man searches for anchor or confirmation.

But all these have a fickleness that makes us anxious. Even if some of these were to give us support so long as we live, at the moment of death these begin to fall apart, and we plunge into an abyss where these cannot provide us with a foothold. Also while we live in this world with these elements in creation as our footholds, there is a growing uncertainty about their strength which makes us vaguely anxious. And life itself puzzles us. What is it for? For enjoyment? The more sensitive souls feel that they cannot be satisfied with that answer. For, the enticing pleasures themselves crumble in the grasp, they fall to pieces and fail to satisfy on attainment. Guilt and anxiety continue to plague our souls, and we are not sure as to how to deal with these indefinables except perhaps to camouflage them, to stifle them, to give them literary expression or to deal with them in some such finally unsatisfying way.

Spurred on by uncertainty and anxiety we begin to grasp the environment with the greatest firmness, and develop our methods of defense and production, our science and technology, our politics and our economics. Yet the more we advance in our control of the environment, something within us seems to get more and more beyond control, and we are still unsettled, insecure, and vaguely anxious.

We sought for confirmation in Creation, and while it has given us some sense of meaning and fulfilment, yet the permanent foothold seems to avoid the groping and aching feet of man.

Most of us even become afraid of asking that ultimate question—Where is the root of all being? Where is the bottom of the abyss? This ground on which I now stand, and which makes me anxious, is it the primal *Ur-grund* for which my soul craves, or merely an *Ab-grund,* the slithery slope of an abyss, or again an *Un-grund,* a non-ground, to use the terminology of Heidegger. Many of us are like the Gadarene swine of the Lucan Gospel, who, with a legion of hard-driving demons in possession of their bodies, were rushing headlong over a steep precipice to their death in the deep sea; when one of the pigs sought to catch his breath long enough to ask his neighbour: 'Do you have any idea where we are all going?' he received the answer: 'Don't ask such silly questions; the important thing for a well-behaved swine is to keep with the herd and to keep moving.'

'Be still, and know that I am God'. No, 'be active and move with the herd'.

But is it a simple choice between the two? Can the true ground for standing be obtained only by denying the reality, the meaning and the purpose of this world?

Why then this creation? Simply to conceal reality from us? Are we not left here to till it and make something of it? Are not all things to be put under the feet of Man in Christ? Are not science and technology and the critical mind also the gifts of God?

Let us remain in quietness and seek for clarification—not in restless anxiety, but in quiet concern.

Let us pray.

'I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT'

The Holy Spirit is not a theme with which the modern world would be very familiar or greatly concerned. And yet there is hardly another theme, which, properly interpreted, could be more relevant to a world torn by strife, weighed down with worry, driven to bestiality by boredom, finding neither meaning nor purpose in life, choosing to be content with pleasure instead of joy, burdened with mass loneliness instead of genuine community, and with burning passion instead of creative love.

The heavens are closed up for modern man despite his bold and adventurous incursions into space and its mysteries. He has 'come of age' only to find himself in a wilderness where only the cold howling wind of meaninglessness and not the welcome roar of the Pentecostal spirit is felt or heard. If God is no more, why speak of the Holy Spirit?

To confess 'I believe in the Holy Spirit' in an age like ours would be audacious if we really meant it. But can one say 'I believe in the Holy Spirit' and not say in the next breath 'I believe in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church?' Is the Holy Spirit some *geistliche* reality that has no visible concrete expression in this sinful world?

The discussion on the Holy Spirit thus becomes doubly

relevant and yet doubly difficult to communicate with the modern world, especially when it is directly connected with the Church whose relevance and effectiveness in our time the world can no longer take for granted.

On the European continent especially, and in those theological circles in the world moulded by Swiss or German Protestant theological thought, there exists a twin danger. On the one hand, by its over-emphasis on Christo-monism, continental theology does inadequate justice to the mystery of the Trinity. On the other, by its reluctance to take the historical manifestation of the Church seriously, it tends to over-spiritualize the Gospel. Both these are in a sense 'sins against the Holy Spirit'.

We say in the Nicene Creed that we believe in the Holy Spirit. We need to ask, first, what do we mean by the word 'believe'? Then we should seek to understand, on the basis of the Scriptures, who the Holy Spirit is and what He does.

'I Believe'

When the uninstructed, often illiterate, ordinary Christian confessed in the 4th century 'I believe, in the Father Almighty . . . in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit', what did he mean by the word 'believe'? Was he acknowledging an intellectual or theoretical conception of the three persons of the Holy Trinity?

It seems more meaningful if we assume that what the Church confessed through the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Symbol was something deeper than a few theological

conceptions. 'I believe *in* . . .' That is indeed a strange way of speaking, rather unknown to Greek literature. You could believe the word (*pisteuein tōi logōi*) of somebody, or even believe the truth (*tais aletheiais*); but it is the New Testament which introduces the expression *pisteuein eis auton*—to believe *in* Him. This use of the word 'believe' followed by the preposition 'in' or 'unto', though occurring in the Synoptics, in Acts, in Pauline and Petrine epistles, is predominantly of Johannine usage. The particular combination of the verb and preposition occurs once in Matthew, once in a doubtful reading in Mark, three times in Acts, not at all in Luke, Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, Thessalonians, the pastoral epistles or Hebrews and only once each in Romans, Galatians, Philippians and 1 Peter; but 34 times in the 4th Gospel.

The phrase which the Council of Nicaea thus chose for expressing its faith over against the Arians was essentially Johannine and has to be understood in that context. It is an impressive fact that St. John, unlike St. Paul, does not use the noun 'pistis'—faith. For the Johannine writing 'to believe' is primarily an act of abiding, an act of finding a foundation for one's existence, a reality to which one traces the origin, sustenance and destiny of one's being, rather than a conceptual act of the mind or even a conviction. A classical Old Testament example of this understanding of 'belief' occurs in Ps. 78:22:

> For they did not remain trusting in God
> Nor depended on His saving work.

It was the anxiety and restlessness that characterized the people of Israel in their wilderness wandering which drew forth this remark from the Psalmist. They were

afraid they were going to perish in the wilderness for lack of food; and all their idolatry and rebellion and strife can be attributed to this basic lack of trust.

To believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is thus not to have a Trinitarian doctrine, but to have the assurance of the power, the wisdom and the love of God in which one could live one's life in quiet joy and peace.

Another classical Old Testament use of this word *aman*—to believe—occurs in Isaiah 28:16.

> Therefore thus the word of the Lord Yahveh
> 'Behold, I lay in Sion a stone, a stone tested and refined, a corner stone, priceless, a foundation of foundation He who stays (believes) on it, shall not rush'.

Here we are given the promise of a 'sure foundation' on which we can stay. The bottomless abyss of non-being need not drive us to panic and restlessness. Here is a place to stand, in the heart of this abyss of existence towards death, which we call life.

If this meaning of 'believe' (*pisteuō*) is primary in its use in the creed then we would understand the whole meaning of 'confession' or 'Creed' (*pistis*) differently. The root-meaning of *aman* (to believe) is to confirm, support or nourish, and the *hiphil* of the root, i.e. *heemin* means primarily, to find confirmation, to find support, to find nourishment, to stand firm, to be established. See especially the rather surprising use of this verb in Job 39:24, where the unbelief of the war-horse is its inability to stand still at the sound of the trumpet.

Let us make this clear. It is true that the qualifying clauses of the creed do have reference to contemporary heresies like Arianism prevailing at the time. But the basic affirmations, i.e., I believe in the Father Almighty, I believe in Jesus Christ, I believe in the Holy Spirit, I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, all refer to a declaration about the foundations of one's own existence. It is not that I declare to the world that these three persons of the Trinity and the Church *exist*. But I am confessing in humble penitence, recalling to myself and the community (the unbaptized are sent out before the creed is said) the foundation of my own existence as well as of the existence of the local congregation. We exist in the Holy Trinity and in the Church. Our confession of the Holy Spirit should be seen as an integral aspect of this basic affirmation about the foundation, source of nourishment and sustenance, and the final goal of our existence.

We need now to consider briefly who the Spirit is and what He does. I would like to present this material under three heads: (1) *Spiritus Creator,* (2) The Spirit of *koinonia* in the Body of Christ and (3) The Spirit as giver of gifts. If we need short-hand for remembering this classification we could use the words Creation, Church and Individual. These are not three separate realms of the Spirit's action, but three modes of His energy, all three of which should be operating in Christians.

Spiritus Creator

In the beginning the Spirit hovered over the waters of chaos, to infuse energy and order into it, bringing

out the creation which was good (Genesis 1:1). Man became a living soul, when the Creator blew his breath (*ruach*—spirit) into his nostrils. The Spirit is not a newcomer at Pentecost. He was in the creation from the beginning. Not only in the creation of man, but long before, when the universe first came to be, the Spirit was there, creating, along with the Father and the Logos.

God's work in the universe is not arranged on the patterns of a modern business establishment, with its neat compartmentalization and division of labour. It is not the case in the Trinity that the father is Creator, the Son is Redeemer and the Spirit is Sanctifier and Perfector. God the Holy Trinity works together in all things.

The Creation itself is an act of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When God the Father spoke the word of Creation, the Spirit was proceeding from Him to indwell and energize that Creation.

And He continues to indwell and energize the creation until now. Both the Logos and the Spirit are immanent in Creation, giving it order and movement, though both remain transcendent in their Triune existence.

Especially in the creation of Man, which is a special event in the creation of the Universe, the Spirit and the Word are with the Father (Job 33:4, Ps. 104:30). The Word was 'the true light enlightening everyone coming into the world' (Jn. 1:9). But the life and the light are not two different things. Understanding or knowing is

a faculty of life itself. As Elihu the friend of Job put it:

> It is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty that makes him understand;
>
> It is not the old who are wise, nor the aged that understand rightness (Job 32:8).

In other words, the evolutionary processes of creation (organic and inorganic) as well as the cognitive processes are activities of the Logos and the Spirit, and these extend not only to non-Christians, but even to the animal and inorganic realms. The Spirit of understanding, wisdom and judgment is given to all mankind, not only to the Church. Science, Law, History, and Technology are equally realms of the work of the Logos and the Holy Spirit.

Especially the human conscience, where both moral discernment and judgment on ultimate issues reside, is the seat and realm of the Holy Spirit in all men.

The Spirit guides the processes of biological evolution, but also operates in men making their historical decisions. History is a continuation of the total time-process. The lowest levels of this process are laws governing mathematics, physics, and chemistry. On the next higher level, though not discontinuous with the lower level, is biology or the laws of life. Higher still stands the level of human decisions, which relates to what man does with himself and with the world around him. Technology, Sociology, History, Medicine, Law, etc. belong to this realm.

The Spirit operates at all these levels, but the higher

the level the greater the degree of freedom given to that on which the Spirit is acting. The methods of understanding what happens on the lowest levels will be inadequate for the higher; though the higher levels are not totally immune from the laws of the lower levels.

This freedom becomes most clearly expressed in the freedom of the human spirit. Freedom means that the Spirit of God does not act compulsively on the agent. The Spirit of God groans and struggles with the human spirit, seeking to persuade rather than to compel, to illumine than to teach. But the persuasion itself does not necessarily occur through conscious struggles, conscious decisions and conscious actions. The Spirit can work also at the sub-conscious level, influencing motivation in imperceptible ways.

The Creator Spirit wants the human spirit to be a co-creator with him. That calling realizes itself even outside Man-in-the-Church, though never apart from the Church, which participates integrally in all that happens to Man.

The Spirit in the Body of Christ

The relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Church is dependent on the relationship between the Spirit and Christ, to which we have already alluded. This relationship is primordial and pre-incarnational. Even in the famous Isaiah passage relating to the Servant of Yahweh, we find this association between Christ and the Spirit:

'Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
My beloved, in whom my soul delights,

I have put my Spirit upon Him
Rightness in the nations he will bring forth'
(Isaiah 42:1).

We see this key verse coming to new meaning at the Baptism of our Lord (Luke 3:21, 22), when the public ministry of our Lord is inaugurated with the Holy Spirit coming down in bodily form, the Father's voice acknowledging the Son in the terms of Isaiah's prophecy: 'Thou art my Son, my beloved, in thee I delight'. The inauguration of the incarnate ministry of Christ is itself thus a Trinitarian event.

But even before the public ministry begins, we see the Spirit's operation in the Incarnation. The angelic annunciation to Zachariah about the forthcoming birth of John the Baptist already declares that even the forerunner of the Messiah is 'to be filled with the Holy Spirit' (Luke 1:15) from his mother's womb. So much more the conception and birth of Christ is a direct act of the Holy Spirit. When Mary protests at the angelic promise to her of the birth of her son on the ground that she has no husband, the angel responds:

'The Holy Spirit will come upon you
The Power of the Most High will overshadow you
Thus the one to be born will be called Holy, Son of God' (Luke 1:35).

The testimonies of Zachariah, Simeon and John the Baptist to Jesus are directly inspired by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:67 ff, Luke 2:26, 27, John 1:6, 32 ff). It is the Holy Spirit's descending on Christ that attests him as the Lamb of God and as the Messiah (John 1:32, 33). But the main characteristic of the Son of God on whom

the Spirit descends is that He is the One 'who baptizes with the Holy Spirit'. He is the bearer of the Spirit, and He introduces men into the new life of the Holy Spirit.

In our dangerous Christomonism we tend to overlook the fact that the Spirit was in and with Christ all through His ministry. The Spirit drives Jesus to be tested in the wilderness, soon after His baptism (Mark 1:12). He returns in the power of the Spirit into Galilee (Luke 4:14). Even the disciples who were sent out by Christ before Pentecost in teams of two are assured that the 'Spirit of your Father' would speak through them when they are arraigned before kings and authorities. Jesus casts out the evil spirits by 'the Spirit of God' (Mat. 12:28). Hendrik Berkhof's strictures about a too exclusive Logos Christology at the expense of a 'pneumatic Christology'[1] need to be taken seriously in our time. The Spirit and the Logos are inseparable in the Incarnation. As we shall soon see the relationship between *Kyrios* and *Pneuma* become so integral that it is not always possible to distinguish the two very clearly.

But the blurring of the distinction is a temptation which has already begun to beset us. Even Prof. Berkhof, who has in my opinion written one of the two best existing books on the Holy Spirit, goes too far in establishing the identity between Christ and the Holy Spirit, and in thinking of the Pneuma as a *Funktionsbegriff*, i.e. 'that the Spirit is Christ in action'.[2]

[1] *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Richmond, Va., 1964, pp. 19 ff.
[2] *Ibid*, pp. 25-26. Berkhof admits that this is not a complete identity; but his formulation of the incomplete identity does inadequate justice to the Church's teaching both on the Trinity and on the economy of the Incarnation.

The relationship between Christ and the Holy Spirit is a great deal more complex than can be easily formulated in our functional and modalistic categories. Prof. Käsemann's suggestion that 'in the Spirit the Resurrected One is manifested in his resurrection-power' is true as far as it goes. But it does not deal adequately with Ascension and Pentecost, or even with the continuing presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Church.

The Resurrection of Christ did not immediately bring in the pouring out of the Spirit. In Matthew and Mark the commissioning of the disciples to preach the Gospel and to baptize occurs before Pentecost. In Luke, however, the bewildered Apostles in post-crucifixion gloom mistake the risen Lord to be a Spirit, and Jesus corrects them by drawing attention to his hands and feet:

> 'Handle me, and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have.'

He is not even The Spirit. That identification can occur only in a tradition which has a very meagre ecclesiology. In Luke, the risen Lord commands the disciples to stay in the city and wait for the promise of the Father (Luke 24:48). The Resurrection does not automatically mean the presence of the Spirit.

It is the same in the fourth Gospel, though the picture there is even more complex. The risen Lord speaks to Mary Magdalene; she clings to him in desperate joy, only to be told that His ascension to the Father is what will make it possible for her truly to cling to her Saviour (Jn. 20:17).

But on the same evening the risen Lord gives the Spirit and the power of forgiving sins to the disciples (Jn. 19:22-23). Even here the risen Lord is not identified with the Spirit. He is the breather of the Spirit—the Spirator of the Spirit, but not the Spirit Himself. The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, but not Christ Himself.

This relationship cannot be clarified without considering the Holy Spirit's presence in the Church. It is to be kept in mind that salvation is life, new life. This new life is the Spirit. The Church is the part of humanity wherein the Spirit as new life is manifestly present.

The things which characterize the life of the Church are first the two great mysteries of Baptism and the Eucharistic rhythm of prayer and worship and second the life of the Church which is the basis for its mission.

In Baptism man is initiated into the community of the Spirit, the Body of Christ. He becomes a member of the Body of Christ; his life is the life of that Body, i.e. the Holy Spirit. Baptism and 'confirmation' cannot of course be separated. To be baptized is to be introduced into the Body of Christ, where the Holy Spirit dwells permanently. But Baptism should not be taken as a sacrament, which bestows an indelible character and confers a special 'grace'. Baptism has meaning in tesms of that into which it is an initiation.

Baptism is like being admitted as an immigrant into a new country. Unless we continue to eat and work and learn we do not become a citizen of the new country by the simple fact of our being admitted there. And yet without that introduction into the soil of the new

country, one can do very little to become a citizen of that country.

Baptism introduces us into the Body of Christ where the Holy Spirit dwells. But we must continue to breathe the air and eat the food, and learn and labour in order to be alive in the life of the Holy Spirit. The Eucharist and prayer (which form one single whole) is the way of life in the Body of Christ. The Spirit is the spirit of the Eucharist, and of prayer. And of *Agape* (Rom. 5:5). That is just as important. One cannot live in the Body of Christ and have access to the Eucharist, or exercise the gift of prayer, if love is blocked by selfishness, bitterness, guilt or moral torpor.

This is the common life of the Spirit in the Body of Christ—Eucharistic worship and outflowing agape. These are both gifts of the Spirit to the Church, gifts which are above all gifts, and without which other gifts are nothing (1 Cor. 13).

To participate in the life of the Spirit means first to have access in the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father in the Eucharist and in prayer, and secondly to live the life of forgiveness, grace and love, of joyous service to the needs of fellowmen. This is what it means to be a Christian. These are the most superior charismata in the Body of Christ, given to the whole community and therefore to every member.

Special and Personal Charismata

Some British theologians have recently questioned the validity of the Epiclesis (invocation of the Holy Spirit) in the Eucharist on the ground that since the Holy

Spirit is the permanently abiding Spirit of the Body of Christ, there is no point in asking Him to come from outside that Body into the Church. This argument is based on several misunderstandings.

First it fails to make the distinction between presence and operation. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ does not mean that all the operations of the Spirit go on automatically. The church prays for special operations of the Spirit in all the mysteries of the Church—in Baptism, Chrismation, the Eucharist, Ordination, Marriage and so on.

Secondly the distinction has to be made between the general operation of the Spirit which is common to all members of the Church, and the special charismata which are differently distributed to various members, all for the common good. The common or general operation lies in the access of the whole community to the presence of God, and the common experience of love that binds the community together.

It is a common misunderstanding of the operation of the Spirit in the individual to think of it mainly in terms of setting up a circuit between our heart and the Bible. The Spirit's work is rather to give different gifts to different people, so that each contributes in his distinctive way to enrich the whole. The gifts of utterance or teaching need not be given to all in the same way; but when it is given to one person in a special way, he has no right to take advantage of it for himself. It must be placed entirely at the service of the whole Body. This insistence that the gifts of the Spirit are not for individual enjoyment, but rather for the welfare of the whole,

has not yet permeated either the clergy or the laity in the Church.

What has been briefly stated here has consequences for the life of the Church today.

First the hiatus between the work of the Spirit outside the Church and inside should be healed. The Church has to become sensitive to the work of the Spirit in art, science, technology, music, literature, politics and economics, in the life of both secular man and in adherents of other religions.

Secondly we must rid ourselves as theologians of our Christomonism and reinstate an essentially Trinitarian approach to the whole of Christian thought, taking fully into account the work of the Spirit in the life of the Church, in its worship and sacraments, as well as in its service. This means recovering a new sense of our union with Jesus Christ the God-man by the Spirit in the Church—not just standing face to face with him in faith. Life in the Body of Christ by the Spirit is a much too neglected theme in contemporary theology.

Thirdly it means that Christians, both clerical and lay, have to develop a new sense of their belonging to a community, and experience the fact that the infinite resources of the Spirit are available to each Christian when his life is dedicated to the service of God and to the life of Christ's Church committed to the service and salvation of mankind.

Pentecost—the coming of the Spirit—what meaning could it have for us today? St. Luke spares no device to make the whole narrative read dramatically. A sound from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, filling the house where the disciples were gathered together; tongues as of fire descending from heaven and resting on the head of each; unlearned men, somewhat dazed and till then depressed, suddenly flushed with enthusiasm, speaking the wisdom of God with striking eloquence.

And whatever language they spoke each one understood that speech as his own—whether Parthian, or Median, Elamite or Mesopotamian, Aramaic or Cappodocean, Greek or Coptic, Latin or Cretan, Libyan or Arabic.

Perhaps St. Luke stretches the point a bit—that, however, is his characteristic way of narrating. But when he goes in for these ultra-miraculous descriptions, we can be sure of one thing—there lies behind the narrative a numinous experience that defies logical description. It is hardly worth our while to demythologize the narrative, and to seek to get to the 'core' of historical truth. No such process of reduction of the mythic prose of the Bible is possible or necessary. Let us leave the myth intact, and seek to enter into that numinous experience that lies behind—taking care not to reduce it to something fully comprehensible, psychologically or in terms of 'inner experience'.

What did this new experience mean to the disciples? And what could it mean to us today?

The communication of the Gospel in the midst of the Asian cultures is a problem that baffles us. The fact of the matter is that the Gospel has made no over-all impact on the Great Religions of Asia; Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism remain fundamentally unmoved by the Gospel. There is a growing sense of frustration among Christians—Westerners as well as Asians—which is slowly leading to the inarticulate assumption that perhaps after all the Church must learn to co-exist with the great religions. Some refuse to give up and seek or devise new methods of communicating the Gospel. 'Dialogue with non-Christian religions' conducted through 'study centres' and 'study conferences' constitutes one of the more recent communication devices for the Gospel. Such Christian centres have recently taken shape among Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims and Jews. By discussing together such great themes as God, Man and the World, we are to communicate the Gospel to the adherents of the great religions.

The manner of this communication is, to put it mildly, somewhat different from the methods used by Peter and Paul. It would no doubt have amused Peter if someone had suggested to him immediately after the experience of Pentecost, that the Apostles should start a centre for the study of Arabian, Elamite, Armenian, Syrian, Greek, Iranian and Babylonian religions.

But why, why should it have amused Peter? Because he and the early Church had more than theological power by which to communicate the Gospel. Their arguments were much less logically convincing than the

arguments of Rabbis like Shammai, Akiba or Gamaliel, philosophers like Philo or Celsus. They were able to communicate the Gospel because there was a numinous quality about the life of the community from which they came, a quality, a self-authenticating power, more eloquent than volumes of dogmatics.

It is far from my intention to disparage genuine intellectual effort in the Church or to recommend a naïve and simple-minded approach to the Bible. It is rather my hope and prayer that we shall together discover some of these qualities which made the proclamation of the community of the Spirit so self-authenticating. And let us be under no illusions. Christ himself, with all the quality of his life, was unable to convince all of his contemporaries.

There were three main qualities in that early community of the Spirit which we need to recover in our own churches. We shall only enumerate them; no attempt can be made to elaborate on these points.

The first quality the New Testament calls *Parrhesia*. The writer of Hebrews puts it most clearly when he says 'Let us then with *parrhesia* approach the throne of Grace, in order that we may receive mercy and find grace in the hour of need' (Heb. 4:16). This boldness to approach God, knowing that He is merciful and compassionate, and that we do not need to hide from His wrath, is the characteristic of the Christian. The writer of Hebrews expresses it in a clearer manner when he says in 10:19 'Having then,' brethren, the *parrhesia* (boldness) for entry into the Holy Place in the blood of Jesus, an entry which he has newly forged for us through the open and living path cutting across the

sanctuary screen of his flesh . . . let us enter with a clear and true heart, in full confidence'. The imagery is particularly eloquent for Jews who would never have the full confidence to approach the Holy Place in the Temple, not to mention the Holy of Holies.

This direct access to God, through the flesh of Christ and the blood of Christ is a clear Eucharistic reference—and the life of intimate love and adoration with God the Father—this is the secret of the power of the early Apostles. This is what really lies behind the Lucan expression in Acts 2:42, describing the experience of the first 3000 souls who were added to the Church on Pentecost: 'They were dedicated together to the teaching of the Apostles, the communion (*koinonia*), the breaking of bread and the Prayers'. Herein also lies the secret of Bonhoeffer, the *disciplina arcana* so often mentioned by him but so culpably neglected by all the modern Bonhoefferians I know. St. Paul also speaks of this secret of his which lies behind his rejoicing and glorying in suffering: 'the purpose of ages which God has fulfilled in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have *parrhesia* (boldness) and access in assurance through his faith' (Eph. 3:12).

The New Testament speaks about the boldness with which unlearned men proclaimed the Gospel, but this boldness was no dare-devilry. In Acts 4:13 we are told 'Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they wondered,' but the same chapter makes it quite plain that this boldness had its source in prayer. In Acts 4:29 the same disciples after they were released from prison pray for this *parrhesia* and in 4:31 we are

told 'when they had prayed the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness.' In the first epistle of John, it is made quite clear that *parrhesia* really means the ability to face God without shrinking in shame (1 John 2:28). At the root of this confidence is a conscience free from guilt, because of a genuine experience of the grace and forgiveness of God. 'Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us we have *parrhesia* (confidence) before God' (1 John 3:21). And it is because of this confident access to God and intimate knowledge of his purposes that we can approach him in confidence and prayer. 'This is the confidence (*parrhesia*) which we have face to face with him that if we ask anything according to his will he responds to us' (1 John 5:14).

In other words the primary quality of *parrhesia* before God and man comes from a life of intimate communion with God. Contemporary European theology likes to present God as sovereign. The whole thrust of the New Testament message is that this sovereign God likes to live in intimate communion with human beings. If we speak only about the sovereignty of God and not about the life in close communion with Him through the Son and in the Spirit, then we are still in the Old Testament and are not Christians yet.

The second main quality of the early community of the Holy Spirit was that it was an international community organically united by the Holy Spirit. The Bible insists that divisions among men are the result of human sin and if salvation means anything, it must mean the reuniting of divided mankind.

Mankind was divided into different races and languages at the Tower of Babel, because of human pride. If mankind is to be saved, it must be re-united. Not in one language, or in one nationality, but in a pluriformity of linguistic, national and cultural expression, and that is what is typified at Pentecost; 3,000 souls coming from among Elamites, Arabians, Armenians, Syrians, Greeks, Mesopotamians and Latins were united together into a single community who were of one accord and had all things in common.

In its early stages the Church continued to have this quality of being able to hold together different nationalities and cultures in one single society. In the last chapter of St. John's Gospel, in the narrative of the miraculous catch, we are told that 153 fish were caught in the net of Peter and of the Apostles, but that the net was not torn. The number 153 probably represented all the different varieties of fish in the Mediterranean then known to the Greeks. The New Testament demands that all the nations of the world should be united in a Church without schism, but this has not happened in history. Nearly all the divisions in the Church have been due to ethnic, cultural or political tensions.

This is a great challenge to our churches today. If the Gospel means deliverance from division, the result must be a united Church in which all nations and cultures can worship together, live together and work together. This would appear to be the destiny of mankind and that destiny is to be prefigured and realized in the life of the Church.

But not simply in the life of the Church universal; it must also find expression at every level. There is no

nation today, which does not have a large community of non-nationals and even among the nationals most nations have diverse ethnic groups. It is a pity that after 2000 years of the coming of the Spirit, the Church is not always able to transcend these narrow ethnic confines and to have multi-ethnic congregations living, praying and working together.

It seems to me therefore imperative that we begin to develop in each part of the world and in every nation multi-ethnic Christian communities. The power of the Spirit must today become manifested in small communities, international in composition, united in faith and worship, having all things in common, serving the needy around them. The pattern of Pentecostal obedience demands this. Such communities are needed as much in the USA and the Congo as in India.

The third fundamental quality of the community of the Spirit must be the willingness to radical obedience. The Pentecostal power that descended on the Church became a revolutionary force in the Graeco-Roman empire, not because the Christians were solid, steady, stable citizens, but because they were radically revolutionary. They repudiated the values of their contemporary societies, namely property, honour and pleasure. In poverty, in dishonour and in suffering, this revolutionary community of the Spirit challenged the entire system of civilized society in their time. We need not expect all the 800 million Christians of the world today to become radically revolutionary, but within this world Church there should arise pockets of communities dedicated to radical obedience. There should be intelligent, dedicated, educated young people who are prepared to be

considered fools by contemporary society and willing to shape together in community those values for which the world is secretly hankering—values which belong to the Gospel but which are contrary to the goals of contemporary civilization. These are the values of a community of joyous simplicity, a community dedicated to hard work and disciplined prayer, a community whose goal is to pour out its life in the service of fellowmen; a community with its ground in the love of God in Jesus Christ and in mutual openness. No blueprint for the pattern of obedience of such a community can be drawn up ahead of time. The shape of a radical obedience in the 20th century cannot be the same as in previous times. Christian obedience cannot run away from the problems of technology and science, from the problems of urban civilization, from the problems of depersonalization.

Pentecost—the coming of the Spirit. What meaning could it have for us today? That very meaning has to be worked out in practice and not on paper. The Spirit of the Lord still bloweth where it listeth. Where there are several international communities gathered together, dedicated to radical obedience, that Spirit can still come from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind and produce the pattern that will give life to the world. *Veni, Creator Spiritus.*

LIFT THE SHROUD OF GLOOM

LESSON: Isaiah 25:1-9:

'Behold, this is our God
For him we have waited
That he may save us
This is Yahweh
For him we have waited
Let us shout for joy
Let us rejoice in His salvation.'

The world is waiting for Yahweh, for the Lord. They do not always know his name. They call him by many names. Sometimes they think that they are waiting for a God who never comes. At others, as in the Swedish producer Ingmar Bergman's films, when after years of waiting, God finally comes through the crack in the wall, He has the bone-chilling aspect of a menacing Giant Spider. Through schizophrenia and through the use of psychedelic drugs men and women in our time are beginning to break through to the beyond. What they see is reality in a dimension that either beckons in benevolent grace or condemns with callous clarity.

The world is waiting for the Salvation of the Lord. They can recognize him as Lord only when He comes to save, or to judge. They will shout for joy and welcome Him when He brings salvation to them.

But what kind of salvation? If we go to the nations under the shroud of gloom to tell them 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved', they will quote back the words of James at you:

> 'If a brother or sister is naked and starving, And if one of you says to them "Go in peace, Be warmed, and be filled", without giving them clothing or food for the body, What is the point of your words?' (James 2:16).

Yes, most of us agree that our true missionary task today is not more preaching but better service to the needy. We would much rather give tractors to our farmers, or send them an agricultural missionary than support a theologian or pastor who goes and preaches over there. But is that not too simple? Is not that sort of work, which is absolutely necessary, better done by more specialized and competent non-church organizations like CROP or World Neighbours Incorporated, or the Heifer Project and so on? I think so. And they know much better how to give without demeaning the donor or the recipient.

In what new and meaningful way then shall we as a Christian Church announce salvation to the world? That is the burning question for the Church today.

In order that the Church united may truly bring the joy of salvation to a waiting world, we as Christians need to do three things: (1) First, we must know what salvation is, (2) second, we must visualize the judgment and salvation of mankind as a whole, (3) third, we must plan and work with other men to make this aspect of salvation real.

I. *What is Salvation?*

We have inherited from our recent forebears a concept of salvation which is mainly other-worldly and highly individualistic. We should, as Christians, disabuse ourselves of this unbiblical understanding of salvation, and recover its authentic meaning.

We must distinguish between (*a*) *personal salvation* and (*b*) *salvation of the world*. We must neglect neither, but learn to understand the one in relation to the other. We should not confuse the two. Neither should we choose one of the two, rejecting the other.

(*a*) Personal salvation is what the Psalmist often cries for.

> 'Incline thine ear to me
> Rescue me with speed
> Be Thou a rock of refuge for me
> A strong fortress to save me.
> Yea, Thou art my rock, my fortress' (Ps. 31:2, 3).

All of us, as persons, stand in need of support, of undergirding, of a foundation on which to trust and be secure. Man is a being in whose depths there is an abyss which threatens to engulf him. The more modern man reflects on his own depths, the more what he sees there scares him. There is chaos, meaninglessness, deep-seated anxiety and an inescapable guilt which condemns him and threatens him with extinction.

Our baptism as Christians is meant to take care of that. We accept the fact that we deserve to die, that we are not worthy of life. We are not what God wants us to be. In baptism we die gladly, and without panic

or anxiety. We share in Christ's death. That means that we are no longer to live for ourselves, but for him and his purposes. It means to have no more anxiety about our future, our ambitions, our careers, our existence in this world or the next. True faith and baptism release us from the concern for ourselves. We no longer seek even to save our own soul. We lose our own souls, in order that we may regain it in an imperishable way.

To have personal faith in Christ is not simply to believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God, but to be secure in Christ. It is to be aware that our life in Christ is already a risen life, no longer subject to the final death of extinction. It is to sense that life, where death is no longer a threat. Neither are we afraid of condemnation. It is to know the joy of realizing that our real life is identical with the life of Christ. Neither national defeat nor global catastrophe, neither personal disaster nor the machinations of the enemy, neither disease nor poverty—nothing at all can separate us from the life that Christ lives in us. Personal salvation is thus the end of all anxious concern about oneself. It liberates us to live without fear. It gives us a sure foundation on which to live, to live in the community of joy and hope, to live with and for others. That is what it means first to be a Christian, to be in the Church, to be in the Body of Christ, sharing his life.

(*b*) The salvation of mankind is of a different order. The prophet Isaiah speaks of this salvation which he sees as a vision of a banquet prepared by the Lord.

On this mountain Yahweh Sabaoth
lays out a banquet for all nations.

Rich food, mature wine,
Dainties delicious, wine ripe and refined;
On this mountain he shall dispel
the shroud of gloom that hangs over all nations,
the veil that clouds the life of all peoples.
He will swallow up death itself for ever
Every tear Adonai Yahweh shall wipe away
From the faces of all that weep
And the suffering and shame of his people
He will remove from the face of the earth—
So Yahweh has spoken. (Isaiah 25:6-8).

That is the other aspect of God's saving work. And it is this saving work among mankind that is the true sign of God's presence. When that happens, the world can say

This is our God
For whom we have waited. (Isaiah 25:9)

We as God's chosen people, freed from the concern about ourselves, should be able to commit ourselves to make this kind of salvation real in our world today. The Church must understand salvation in both these forms. We must never allow ourselves to forget the dramatic opening words of Christ's public ministry in the Synagogue:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
He has anointed me to announce good news to the afflicted,
He has sent me to proclaim liberation to captives
Recovery of sight to the blind,
To free the oppressed
To declare the time of acceptance' (Luke 4:18-19).

If our understanding of salvation does not hold these two aspects of salvation, personal and social, in fruitful inter-relation, we would have diluted the Gospel, and been unfaithful to our calling.

II. *What does the Salvation of Mankind mean?*

The shroud of gloom lies over all nations. No country is exempt. No people can dwell care-free today. Millions starve, die of disease, live in despair, shrivel spiritually from loneliness and fear, disintegrate from boredom and guilt, perish from hatred and resentment, murder each other without rhyme or reason.

One hears of catastrophe in the air, landslides and earthquakes, floods, famines and the fury of the elements taking their toll in human lives. In Vietnam people burrow underground like rats, for the sky is full of peril, and the surface of the earth is paved with poison. Death lurks round every corner. Human lives are sacrificed every day at the altar of a big-power struggle. Civilized man becomes callous, treating human beings as vermin to be exterminated. Killer and killed alike behave like beasts, and lose all human dignity. Demeaning weapons of increasingly atrocious inhumanity are devised and perfected every week.

In a country like India, millions languish in a morbid fatalism that saps their vitality and destroys their dignity. One cheats and deceives for a morsel of bread, one salvages an undigested wild seed from cow-dung to roast and eat it, one begs and steals without compunction or conscience. In the very midst of misery, man's inhumanity to man becomes more starkly displayed.

Human beings lose all concern for their fellowmen, and become lost in selfishly personal and parochial pursuits.

In China 750 million people live in terror of an atomic holocaust any time. They make a valiant effort to drive away poverty and corruption, but have to waste a major portion of the fruit of their toil in preparing for defence against potential aggressors.

In Southern Africa, black peoples are treated as inferior beings; the dignity and transcendent honour of the human person is flouted when his skin happens to be black.

In the affluent nations, violence erupts in senseless protest against oppression; men are estranged from each other by an exaggerated individualism; even the contented cows of society, who have all the goods they need and more, live without zest or joy.

Of course the middle-class Christian, to which category most of us belong, trundles along in life without taking too much thought about the troubles that we and others are beset with. Our smooth-lawned suburbs hide beneath their calm the tensions between husband and wife, between parent and child, between neighbour and neighbour.

When occasionally the poor starving Indian exposes his protruding rib or his bloated stomach, we pay out a few paise, with a curse under our breath or a glow of joy at doing a good deed.

There is corruption in every government of the earth; that which belongs to the poor is stolen by the rich. Bribery and nepotism become normal. Responsible

leaders have to partake in a corrupt structure in order to be able to continue to lead. Poor nations become poorer. Rich nations become richer.

I have of course painted a picture that is loaded and intentionally gloomy. But is it a totally untrue picture? It is certainly one-sided. One could speak about the progress being made in education, health, technology and communication. One could, as some of my friends have done, extol the virtues of the secular city and make believe that we are actually on the way to entering the Kingdom of the metropolitan complex with its marvels of mythic delight and miracles of technological attainment.

But the picture of human misery is equally real, and is often left to the fund-raisers and the do-gooders to describe.

The shroud of gloom that lies over the nations is not formed by my clouded thinking. It is there, solid and stubborn, refusing to be lifted by all our wistful blowings of hot air.

If God is to become real today, this shroud has to be lifted. It is strange indeed that those theologians who specialize in writing elaborate obituary notices for God, fail to speak with equal passion about dying mankind. Does this optimism that they claim lies at the root of their theology spring from any serious involvement in the misery of mankind? God is dead because man is dying and nobody cares. If God too is subject to death, then we can die in peace without jealousy about a Being who lives beyond death.

But that is not our faith. God is dead. But He is also risen. We are dead, but we are also risen with Him. The risen Lord will appear to man, only when man accepts in full his vocation to be truly man. And the salvation of mankind can lie in nothing less than the full acceptance of the full vocation of the whole of mankind.

This implies three basic commitments on the part of all men, whether they be Christians or not. This is not in any sense to belittle the joy and freedom of personal salvation, but rather that we may all become more human by participating in the salvation of mankind.

First, all men must pledge their ultimate loyalty under God, to nothing less than the whole of humanity.

Second, all men must commit themselves to a world in which the economic, social and political structures ensure that the total resources of the earth are put at the disposal of the whole of mankind in a fair, just and equitable way.

Third, all men must commit themselves to a world in which the transcendent dignity of man shall not be trampled upon by any structure, social, political, economic or religious, however necessary and valuable that structure may be.

Commitment to the whole of mankind, work for international economic, social and political justice, and guarantee of the dignity of man—these are the three aspects that belong integrally to the salvation of mankind, which is just as much God's will and purpose as the salvation of persons.

III. *What do we need to do?*

The implications of these three commitments are earth-shaking, and often shattering.

(*a*) The commitment to the whole of mankind means that loyalty to one's own nation can no longer be ultimate. On an issue like the Vietnam war, we do not think in terms of what is best for our own nation. We do not think simply in terms of a power-struggle between the Governments of the USA and the West on one side, and those of USSR and China on the other. We have to think in terms of what is best for the whole of mankind. There we should become patient and humble enough to listen to the views of those that differ from us on the issues of world peace. The Chinese and the North Vietnamese may have an understanding of what is best for mankind—which may be radically different from our view. They may, e.g. hold the view that so long as the USA, the USSR and their allies share between them the controls of international economic and political power, mankind will not be able to progress. As Christians we should dare to listen to such a point of view with creative sympathy, and not arrogate to ourselves the right to decide on the destiny of mankind against the will of a major portion of it.

Commitment to the whole of humanity should at least mean that every necessary sacrifice is made to see that 750 million people are not excluded from the parleys of mankind.

Commitment to the whole of humanity should at least mean that Christians should be bold enough to re-examine the concept of 'national sovereignty' which has bedevilled

the problem of developing adequate and effective structures for the life of the whole of mankind.

(*b*) The salvation of mankind means that the resources of humanity should be used for constructive and not destructive uses. Atomic stockpiling must cease as a primary step. Public opinion should be created to encourage nuclear disarmament. Our economies should gear themselves more to production for peace than for war. International control of world power should become increasingly a reality. Nations should forgo their jealous hold on so-called sovereignty, and learn to live in trust as a community of nations, rather than an odd medley of jungle animals.

Such an international political structure should have control of nuclear power both to meet the consumer needs of mankind and to ensure peace in the world.

Such a structure should also be able to regulate the anomalies of the international market, which now works to the total disadvantage of the poorer nations. Christians must see that aid as it is now given does not really cover a fraction of the undue profits derived by the rich nations in their trade with the poor. We should realize that giving a fair price to the poor nations' products is a better way of helping them than aid which both corrupts them and decreases their dignity.

At the same time as reasonable price structures are assured for the products of the poorer countries, there has to be a systematically planned and internationally controlled transfer of capital resources and technical skill from the rich nations to the poor nations to offset the present imbalance. At present less than 0·75% of

the Gross National Product of the industrialized nations goes to the developing countries mostly on unsatisfactory bilateral arrangements. We must create public opinion in order to permit our Governments to arrange for a transfer of at least 2.5% of the rich nations' G.N.P. to the poor nations. If trade and price control, as well as systematic and multilaterally controlled transfer of resources and skills, is to become fully effective, we need stronger international, economic and political structures than we now have. Christians, as sons of the Kingdom, should be the first to see the vision of this international humanity and to prepare public opinion for its realization.

(*c*) The dignity of man is trampled upon today in India where Caste structures refuse to give way to enlightened concepts of human justice.

The dignity of man is trampled upon today when systems like Apartheid are canonized in the name of God, and are allowed to oppress the black people and make the white people inhuman. It is trampled upon when a white minority rules the country against the will of its black majority as in Rhodesia, South West Africa, Angola or Mozambique.

The dignity of man is trampled upon when any group of human beings, be they American negroes, Indian Nagas or African pygmies, are not treated with full respect and given maximum opportunity to compensate for their social disabilities.

The dignity of man is trampled upon when dehumanizing instruments of horror are used in guerilla warfare in Vietnam and in the demeaning torture of prisoners to elicit information.

But the dignity of man is also trampled upon when two-thirds of the world has to live in crowded, unhealthy, half-starving conditions.

We cannot have a 'great society' in just one nation. We cannot eliminate poverty in one nation, and carve out a parcel of land to be the paradise of the earth when the rest of mankind still lives in squalor and starvation.

All this is part of what we mean by the fullness of life. The visible unity of the world-wide Church becomes an urgent nesessity as a timely sign of the coming unity of mankind. Our own aid and trade structures in the churches have to change. No man, no denomination, no national council of churches, can be an island.

If personal salvation is authentic, it must bear fruit in the salvation of mankind. Only when our call to individuals to repent and believe the Gospel is coupled with a call to ourselves to make real the sign of the coming Kingdom, can the shroud of gloom that lies over the nations begin to be lifted.

When such commitment to humanity, commitment to just international structures, and commitment to basic human dignity becomes real, people will see that God is preparing a banquet for all nations.

Then will they shout—those who think God is dead and those who are waiting for God or Godot with or without idols—and say with joy:

Behold, this is our God
For him we have waited
That he may save us.

Walter Hilton, the English mystic, draws our attention to the distinction made by St. Gregory regarding the 'two ways of life in the Holy Church through which Christians may reach salvation; one is called active and the other contemplative. One or other of these is necessary to salvation'[1]. This distinction is by no means original with Gregory or Hilton. Long ago the Hindus made the distinction between *Karma-yoga* (the way of union by activity) and *Jnana-yoga* (way of union by contemplation).

St. Francis de Sales, the great Roman Catholic guide of the ordinary man's devotional life, refers to the fact that most earlier treatises on the subject have been written for the 'instruction of persons very much withdrawn from the society of the world, or at all events, they have taught a kind of devotion which leads to this complete withdrawal'[2].

I think most of us would agree with St. Francis, even if we may not be satisfied that his patterns of devotional life for men not withdrawn from the world can be wholly serviceable for our day. St. Francis may be right in thinking of some of these spiritual manuals as suitable for those who have left the world or want to do so.

[1] *The Ladder of Perfection*, Tr. Leo Sherley-Price, Penguin, 1957. p. 2.

[2] *Introduction to the Devout Life*, St. Paul Publications, Allahabad, 1924, p. 7.

The monk, however, is not one who has left the world in a physical sense. The best monks have been aware that even when one leaves the world physically it is still with him in the wilderness. The monk's relationship to society in general and the Body of Christ in particular is of a different order than a simple 'separation'.

The flourishing of monasticism in the Church often coincides with the prevalence of increased laxity in the discipline of the Church in general. The first great sprouting of the monastic vocation came with the beginning of the Constantinian era, when the 'whole world' came inside the Church. To say at that time that there should be the same strict discipline for the whole Church would have been futile because unenforceable. The monk therefore was then one who separated himself not necessarily from the world as such but only from the very unholy worldliness and indifference of the Church in general.

But there was more to it than a mere desire to be 'better than the ordinary'. The longing for the Kingdom of peace was deeply ingrained in the consciousness of the Church from its very beginning. There was the temptation, however, for a church weary and worn out by persecution, to accept the new tolerant regime as the kingdom itself. The conflict between this world and the world to come appeared, in the Constantinian era, to have been resolved too easily.

The Christian monk saw this problem clearly, and made himself a symbol of the protest against this too facile identification of the world and the Kingdom, and experienced the special vocation to be a reminder of the coming Kingdom to the whole Body of Christ. This

was neither a rejection nor a hatred of this world as being evil. It was merely a continuation of what was experienced and expressed by the whole Church in the first centuries of its existence, when the conflict between the 'way of this world' and the 'way of the coming Kingdom' was palpably expressed in the conflict between the Church and the State which ensued in persecution. In that early period, to be a Christian meant being a witness of the *eschaton*.

Caesar, however, acknowledged both worlds. Sycophants like Eusebius of Caesarea, the famous Church historian, lauded the Emperor Constantine as 'standing alone and pre-eminent among the Roman Emperors as a worshipper of God; alone as the bold proclaimer to all men of the doctrine of Christ; having alone rendered honour, as none before him had ever done, to His Church'[1].

But it was in this permissive atmosphere that heresies like Arianism flourished in the Church. And the role of the monks in routing Arianism which often enjoyed imperial support should never be underestimated by us who tend to be anti-monastic in our outlook.

It was however the Constantinian period which brought the Church to a new and significant crisis for its own life. The Church was forced in this setting to assume a more positive attitude towards the world. On the one hand were the monks pursuing the development of the inner life, of a common discipline of obedience developed under circumstances not available to men living 'in the world'; on the other the Bishops, having the spiritual oversight of ordinary people, were being

[1] *Vita Constantini*, IV:75.

forced to think through issues of moral and social responsibility for all Christians living in the world. In some, like St. Basil, the two concerns converged. Ultimately however, the two systems of Christian life were not opposed to each other. Their ground principles were the same, and the patterns were complementary to each other.

The fundamental concept that held the two together was that of 'agape in the Body of Christ'. For both the man in the world and for the monk, the goal was the growth of *all* from the state of 'children of this world' to that of 'sons of the Kingdom'.

But the monk had a special vocation: 'to renounce the world in order to redeem it'. A formal rejection of the natural ties that bind them to the world was the means by which they sought to become related to it in a creative way.

The rejection and the suffering it involved was never taken as an end in itself. Liberation was the immediate goal; but liberation in order to relate oneself in freedom to that from which one was liberated. We must not understand this early and creative monasticism in the terms either of extremists in the Egyptian and Syrian deserts or of aberrations in medieval western monasticism. *Apatheia* was not lack of feeling, but liberation from desires; but *Apatheia* was always to be undergirded by Agape, as St. Clement so constantly emphasized.[1]

The sweetness of suffering, as expressed in the self-flagellations, the devotion to the bleeding heart, and the morbid contemplation of the sufferings of Christ on the

[1] Clement: *Stromateis* 2:45; 6; 9:7-79.

Cross, as developed by medieval European piety, did not make its appearance in this early stage.

The denial of the world and its desires and concerns then was not an end in itself, but a *praeparatio* for filling the soul with new and life-giving desires for a different world, for the Kingdom, for the presence of Christ. To commune with Him without the hindrance of worldly desires, to be liberated by the Truth that makes men free, and to be transformed into His own likeness by exposure to Him whose image we are, these were the means by which the monks sought to become related to the world created by Him, in the same manner as He, the incarnate One, was related to it.

There were two things that related the monk to the world—prayer and work. *Ora et labora*, was after all, a monastic dictum. The one family from which Christian monasticism received its greatest impetus, that of St. Basil, clearly emphasized the element of *work for service* as a major part of the monastic duty. Apart from the Rules of St. Basil, the best and most human evidence for this comes from the life of St. Macrina, the elder sister of St. Basil, written by none other than the youngest of their brothers, St. Gregory of Nyssa. Writes St. Gregory about his sister and brother:

The great Basil returned after his long period of education, already a practised rhetorician. He was puffed up beyond measure with the pride of oratory and looked down on the local dignitaries, excelling in his own estimation all the men of leading and position. Nevertheless Macrina took him in hand, and with such speed did she draw also toward the true

objective of the love of wisdom that he
glories of this world, and deserted it for thi
life where one toils with one's hands.[1]

That was St. Gregory's description of his b
St. Basil's renunciation of the world and his comm
ment in the monastic vocation. This family produce
least half-a-dozen saints. The grandmother and five grar it
children: Macrina, Basil, Peter, Gregory and Basil's
younger brother Naucratius who died at the age of 26.
Naucratius was the one who led the way for his elder
brother Basil to found the monastery on the banks of
the Iris.

At 21, Naucratius had already finished his education
and begun to glitter in the firmament of oratory. But
suddenly he felt called, no doubt inspired by his elder
sister Macrina, to renounce this glory and the comfort
of his aristocratic and affluent home, to follow a life of
solitude and poverty in a luxuriously verdant family
estate on the riverside, under an overhanging mountain.

'There he lived' (St. Gregory tells us), 'far removed
from the noises of the city and the distractions that
surround the lives both of the soldier and the pleader
in the law courts. Having thus freed himself from the
din of the cares that impedes man's higher life, *toiling
with his own hands* he looked after some old people
who were living in poverty and wretchedness, consider-
ing it appropriate to his mode of life to make such
a work his care. So the generous youth would go on
fishing expeditions, and since he was expert in every

[1] *Life of St. Macrina.* Eng. Tr., SPCK, 1916, p. 28.

port, he provided food to his grateful clients
means. And at the same time by such exer-
e was taming his own youth.[1]

let us take a look at the asceticism of St. Macrina
ner mother, especially after the crushing blow
ved by them with the untimely death of Naucratius.

She (the daughter) induced her (the mother) to live on a footing of equality with the staff of maids, so as to share with them in the same food, the same kind of bed, and in all the necessaries of life, without any regard to differences of social status.[2]

These were among the earliest of monks[3] and nuns. St. Macrina started a community of sisters in the Pontic woods which became a great centre of service to all the country around. The men's community founded by St. Basil also was an active community. These monks and nuns were not seeking merely to separate themselves from the world. They were, on the other hand, eschatological symbols denoting the transience and vanity of the glories of this world and drawing the attention of men to the everlasting kingdom by embodying it in their own lives.

[1] *Ibid*, p. 30.
[2] *Op. Cit.* p. 34.
[3] Monasticism has its beginnings in Egypt. The great names are St. Antony (ca 251-356) and St. Pachomius (ca 290-346), St. Basil (ca 330-379) developed the coenobitic idea of Pachomius, and transplanted the monastic idea on Asian soil. From there it came to the West with Martin of Tours (Patron Saint of France d. 397) and John Cassian (360-435), but the definitive shape of Orthodox western monasticism was formed by St. Benedict (ca 480-ca 550). The mendicant monasticism which developed in East and West (in the west it received the approval of the Church and State by about the middle of the 13th century) is in a sense an indication of a time of theological disintegration.

Their prayer, their service and their Euc. . kept them in active contact with the life of the Christ and the world. They conceived their voc. a special vocation within the Body and not . of it.

In the East as well as in the West, there were corr tions and aberrations in the monastic orders. Exhi it tionism and exploitation were among the main problems Further, the monks often took delight in theological controversies to the extent that they have sometimes been guilty of even bloodshed in Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt. The Western monks also were not all of the same high calibre as is evidenced by the very first chapter of the Rules of St. Benedict, the great formative genius of western monasticism, who drew his inspiration from St. Basil. Says St. Benedict (c. 489-c. 550), speaking about two classes of monks whom he disapproves:

> A third and most baneful kind of monks are the Sarabites, who have been tried by no rule nor by the experience of a master, as gold in the furnace, but being soft as lead, and still serving their worldly interests, are known to lie to God by their tonsure. These in twos or threes, or even singly, without a shepherd, shut up, not in the Lord's sheep folds, but in their own, make a law to themselves in the pleasure of their own desires. Whatever they think fit or choose to do, that they call holy, and what they like not, that they consider unlawful.
>
> 'The fourth kind of monks are those called *Girovagi* (quod nominatur Gyrovagum) who spend all their lives wandering about divers provinces, staying in different cells for three or four days at a time, ever

[illegible] no stability, given up to their own [illegible] and to the snares of gluttony, and worse in [illegible] than the Sarabites. Of the most wretched [illegible] these it is better to say nothing than to speak. [illegible]g them alone therefore, let us set to work, by [illegible]elp of God, to lay down a rule for the Cenobites, [illegible]is, the strongest type of monks.'[1]

[illegible] is clear that the best in the monastic movement [illegible]ways discouraged individualist aberrations, and we must [illegible]ot judge the whole monastic movement by its wide-[illegible]spread malpractices. The good monastic communities

(*a*) maintained close relationship with the body of Christ in their life and teaching,

(*b*) emphasized the *koinobium*, the common life of the community, rather than individual perfection,

(*c*) interceded for and served the whole world.

The Need for a New Askesis

Let us make some qualifications at the outset:

(1) There exists no such person as the *man of today*. All of us belong to various days. Some are still living in conditions rather medieval or pre-renaissance. Others are living in the 18th, 19th or some even in the 17th century by a certain manner of reckoning. Different societies have different needs and we cannot stipulate one pattern of *askesis* for the whole Christian world today.

[1] *Regula S. Benedicti.* Cap. I.

(2) While a modern askesis would be t
all Christians, we need not be so democratic a
that unless it suits the majority it is not useful
who conscientiously apply themselves to a dis
Christian life have always been in a minority, e
the early centuries of the Church's life. We do not
to refrain from doing anything, until we can bring
whole Church into it. Significant movements of Christi it
discipline have always started in a corner, unofficially.

(3) The pattern of a disciplined Christian spirituality need not and should not be spelt out in such detail as to become a legal code or a straitjacket for the human person or community. There should be great flexibility and opportunity for freedom.

The major revision in Christian askesis needed for our times is one of ethos. The Church in times past has prescribed the following basic elements for the development of the spiritual discipline of the Church.

(*a*) Regular participation in the eucharistic sacrifice and communion.

(*b*) Prescribed times and forms of prayer.

(*c*) Prescribed times and forms of fasting.

(*d*) The Liturgical year as a means of participation in the saving events of the economy of redemption.

(*e*) The sacrament of penance or confession.

(*f*) Preaching and teaching.

(*g*) A general injunction to engage in works of charity.

(*h*) Acts of humility and submission to authority.

...tem of Christian discipline need not ... these, not even the last. But all seem ... of revision of ethos.

...l, our modern life cannot stand sheer pas... infantilism. Neither can it accept mortifica... mortification's sake. We need an askesis that ...ong other things:

...) not seriously impede the activist life that we in ...odern world are generally required to live;

(*b*) contribute to the full *maturity* of a life lived in ... world where the ethical shades are no longer black ...nd white but grey or changing in colour according to ...ircumstance;

(*c*) ensure the basic dignity of man, his acceptance and control of the world around him rather than a rejection and hatred of it;

(*d*) demand less of his time than in earlier periods of history;

(*e*) help in the emergence of the sum-total of mankind in its economic, social and political life, in such a way that the whole of human life shows forth the glory of God;

(*f*) teach Christian man to accept and utilize the suffering that naturally befalls him and his fellowmen, rather than to seek out forms of self-inflicted suffering;

(*g*) teach Christian men and women to have a healthier and therefore more Christian understanding of the sexual relationship and its creative use for the augmentation of the life of man;

(*h*) embody a healthier understanding of the body-

mind-soul relationship which does not fall i
dualism of body and spirit;

(*i*) take full account of the deeper (sub-co
level of the human psyche in order to apply the r
tion wrought in Jesus Christ to these levels also;

(*j*) do full justice to the freedom and dignity
man, which has been brought home to us by the seric it
violation of it in slavery, racial persecution and
colonialism.

Spirituality and Ethics

From what has been said before, we can see that Christian ethics is not an autonomous discipline with its own principles. It is not separable from the total reality of the life in the Spirit. In fact the Christian ethic is the fruit of the spiritual life. Thus we can no more create an artificial pattern of life called the Christian ethic, which is not rooted in the life in the spirit, than we can create the fruit of a tree artificially. The tending and nurture of the tree will produce the fruit, rather than *vice versa*.

Christian ethic does not tell Christians how to behave. It tells them what they are, and what this means in terms of conduct. Doing can never be separated from being. The objective of the spiritual life is not the Beatific vision, but to lead to the development of a dynamic human community, namely the Body of Christ, which by the transformation of its inner being, becomes what God wants mankind to be. The actions of this new community will, by the power, the love and wisdom of God which animate it, produce concretely the answer

of mankind as to what kind of a life it In other words, the Christian ethic cannot on paper in terms of principles and pat- ough certain guidelines are discernible. The of the Christian community in the Spirit is for which the world is looking. It is not then ellectual effort to answer the moral dilemma of n man that constitutes the need of the time. er a disciplined Christian community, living within full complexity of modern life, must continually work it in each situation, the pattern of life that indicates he will of God for the whole of humanity in that ituation.

Contextualism is not thus a philosophical system, but an incarnate pattern of Christian life which has to be worked out by the power of the Spirit by an elite community within the Body of Christ. This cannot be done once for all. It must be flexible and able to face each new situation freshly to work out the will of God in that situation without sparing any cost.

Those Christians, then, who are involved in identical situations, say, social service, or political responsibility or technological production, or administrative offices, or in the academic or professional life, should together as a group develop their common spiritual life, not without relation to the whole Body of Christ, and out of that common life in the spirit should emerge a pattern that can be the inspiration then for non-Christian society as well.

WHAT IS RENEWAL?

During the week of prayer for Christian unity, it seems proper for us to consider what exactly we should pray for, in praying for unity, Christian as well as human.

I wish to draw your attention to four fundamental pairs of inseparables that have to be kept together, if the ecumenical movement is not to be shipwrecked on the shoals of complacency and lack of vision.

I. *Unity of the Church and the Unity of Mankind*:

The Church belongs integrally to mankind and all that happens to one has consequences for the other. The ecumenical movement itself was occasioned by the coming together of mankind on a 'secular' level, through the development of communications and inspired by organisations such as the League of Nations and the International Red Cross. In its turn the ecumenical movement has to make its own distinctive contribution to the unity of mankind.

The Church as an organized international movement across national frontiers begins to take shape in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the world conquests of Spain and Portugal. It was, as was the later Protestant missionary expansion, simultaneously both a political movement and a religious movement.

It was this movement, this explosive expansion, of the West into the rest of the world in the last four or five centuries, that has given rise to the modern ecumenical movement as well as to the movement of humanity towards finding a world-wide structure of unity. It will be a failure on our part as children of God to see the hand of God only in the ecclesiastical movement, and not in the socio-economic and political movement of humanity towards unity.

It is appropriate therefore that we pray during this week not only for the unity of the Church, but also for the unity of the world, for peace and justice in the midst of humanity. Here we need to change our habits of thinking which are so parochial and dishonest. What we today call the third world is actually more than two-thirds of the world—2076 millions of people among a world total of 3,000 million. What we regard as the Western world and the Eastern world, i.e. America, Western Europe, and Eastern Europe including Eastern Russia, together constitute less than a third of the total world, about 924 millions of people. This latter group which we may legitimately call the 'North-Western world' is dominating the rest of the world, politically, economically and therefore culturally. Here is a situation that threatens the peace of the world much more seriously than the so-called East-West conflict between Western powers and European Communist powers.

Our attention in this week of prayer for Christian unity needs to be focused on this fact of growing disparity between a third of the world which is rich and getting richer, and the two-thirds of the world which is poor and getting poorer.

Our efforts for the unity of the Church would totally lack realism if it neglects the findings of the Church and Society World Conference held in Geneva in 1966. If there was one issue that has come out of the Geneva Conference as a clear priority for the coming decade, it is that of International Economic Justice. Dr. Visser 't Hooft raised it already in his opening address when he spoke of a 'responsible *world* society in which each nation feels responsible for the welfare of all other nations. In Amsterdam the emphasis was too largely on economic justice *within* each nation. We have now come to see far more clearly that the crucial issue now is that of *international* economic justice'.

Dr. Raoul Prebisch of the United Nations Commission for Trade and Development gave content to the notion. The gap between the *have* nations and the *have-not* nations, or as we may put it, the 'have-enough and more' nations and the 'have-not-enough' nations, instead of being bridged, is growing wider. The industrially developed countries have increasingly less need of raw materials and other goods from the developing countries, while the need of developing countries for industrial goods from the developed countries is growing greater and greater. The imbalance in trade created by this phenomenon is complicated by two other factors. The price of industrial commodities exported by the developed countries is constantly going up, because the wages and the standard of living of people are going up. The prices of raw materials and other goods exported by the developing countries do not go up in the same proportion; on the contrary, as the technology of the developed countries creates synthetic substitutes for many of the raw materials, the demand for raw materials from developing

countries grows lesser and lesser, and therefore their prices in the world market are on the decline. This means the poor have to pay more and more in terms of their goods for less and less they can get from the rich nations, while at the same time their need for these latter goods is constantly on the increase.

The second factor is that if the poor countries try to sell their manufactured goods in the western markets in order to gain the necessary foreign exchange for the goods they have to buy from the developed countries, then they face prohibitive tariff walls.

The 'trade gap' that thus develops not only retards economic development of the poor nations but makes their economies actually deteriorate. This is a totally unjust human situation about which the conscience of mankind, and especially of the northern nations, has to be roused. Dr. Prebisch, who ought to know what he is talking about, says that 'this is quite a manageable problem', and while it is a great problem for the poor countries, it can be solved by the rich countries without much disruption to their own economic growth. Only the rousing of conscience, the activation of goodwill and the political decisions that would result from these are lacking.

The process of growing imbalance in wealth between north and the south cannot be reversed simply by small adjustments in international trade and price regulations. Resources have to be transferred from the developed countries to the developing ones through a systematic and dependable programme. There are three questions here: how much, what kind and how.

On the question of how much, the present picture of aid from the developed to the developing countries is rather depressing.

The First Development Decade of the United Nations had the target of 1% of total Gross National Product of the developed countries to be transferred to developing countries. In 1961 the proportion of resources transferred as aid was 0·87%. By 1964, instead of growing towards the target figure of 1%, it had fallen to 0·66%. What was worse, 50% of this amount was neutralized by payments to the rich countries for services rendered. In some regions, repayment of loans and payments for services have been adding up to more than the aid received. The 1% minimum target should be immediately reached if we are to avert catastrophe. A 2% goal should be striven for. 2·5 to 3% of the G.N.P. of developed countries can make a real difference in the pace of development of the poorer countries.

What kind of resources are to be transferred? Capital and technical know-how are the highest priorities. Machinery comes next, but it is becoming increasingly clear that western technology is suited only to an economy where there is optimum employment and considerable shortage of man-power. The developing nations require a labour-intensive technology, or machines that do not take away employment from the existing labour force, but provide it with full employment and thus increase production for the whole economy. This is going to be a tough problem to crack. But it must be done.

How should resources be transferred? Bilateral aid is becoming more and more politically enslaving and

humiliating. Multilaterally administered aid has a very high over-head. We need to find a more efficient and business-like, non-bureaucratic, internationally controlled machinery to handle this transfer of resources.

The problem here is enormous, but not impossible. The present situation is outrageous. According to Barbara Ward 18% of the world's population has some 70 to 80% of the world's resources. As she put it, this is the apocalyptic moment in the world's history, when we can either incinerate the world, or feed it and lift it up. We cannot long hover between the two. If we do not decide to do the latter and devote our energies to that end, we may find that the day of wrath would descend on us sooner than we expected. This is not a plea for charity, but a cry for justice, an appeal to the conscience.

Here precisely is an area where the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC could do something together, in the name of our common Lord Jesus Christ, for the sake of that whole mankind for which he died. Thus alone can the close connection between the unity of mankind and the unity of the Church be manifested.

II. *Unity and Renewal*

The Fourth Assembly of the WCC was held in Uppsala, Sweden, in July 1968, and had as its main theme, a part of the text of Revelation 21:4 'Behold, I make all things new'. The emphasis was on Renewal, rather than on the coming of the Lord at the end of time. Renewal was chosen as the main theme because of a conviction that renewal is both the foundation and the true consequence of unity, inseparable from it.

The unity of the Church cannot be a matter of ecclesiastical carpentry—of organic church unions which administratively unite denominations without kindling the spiritual life and vitality of the members of the churches.

Some thirty church unions have been consummated from 1947 till now; 44 negotiations (116 churches involved) are now in progress. We have now united churches in Japan, India, Germany, Canada, USA, Australia and Africa and in many other countries. We have enough data on which to base our estimate of the practical impact of a church union on the lives of members of the uniting churches. It would not be untrue to say that by and large, organizational mergers have had much less real influence in the lives of the uniting churches than was anticipated. This is true of the Church of South India or the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland.

Unity does not necessarily create renewal or a new missionary upsurge in the uniting churches. This discovery has been somewhat disconcerting—not to say embarrassing—to many ecumenical enthusiasts. Our predictions about greater unity leading to better mission have not actually come true.

It is now seen more clearly that unity and renewal are parts of the same goal, and we have to aim at both in order to achieve either. We now realize that organizational unity is not the same as the unity which Christ wills for His Church. We now realize that the first step to unity is renewal in all the churches, and in society as well. But renewal itself comes about in the context of ecumenical worship, study, dialogue, and collaboration.

The two are inextricably intertwined. To speak about unity is to speak about renewal and *vice versa.*

This is why the Assembly of the World Council of Churches, after having explored the themes of 'God's order and Man's disorder' at Amsterdam in 1948, 'Jesus Christ, the Hope of the World' at Evanston in 1954, and 'Jesus Christ, the Light of the World' at New Delhi in 1961, has now turned to 'Behold, I make all things new'.

A just social order was the major concern in a war-torn Europe in 1948. The practical impossibility of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth is in tension with the eschatological vocation for social justice—this was the concern in 1954. In 1961, the setting of largely non-Christian Asia and the fact of the WCC-IMC merger which was being consummated at New Delhi led to a missionary theme being adopted for the Assembly, perhaps the only one of the three Assembly themes that did not quite come off.

In 1968, the theme had to be: 'Behold, I make all things new'. For today we are gripped with the urgency of the problem of renewal in Church and society; we are now convinced that neither the Church nor Society is in a vigorous state of health. In fact both appear to be quite sick, and we do not even have a correct diagnosis of what is wrong.

Pope John of blessed memory created the term 'aggiornamento' or 'up-dating' for what he wanted to accomplish in the Church, but did not use the word 'renewal' for it. In WCC circles the word 'renewal' has acquired a special aura, and Dr. Visser 't Hooft has placed renewal at the centre of WCC's concerns. But

the content of 'renewal' is yet far from clear or agreed upon.*

* Renewal is a word of comparatively rare occurrence in the New Testament. The noun *anakainosis* is used only twice: in Romans 12:2 and in Titus 3:5.

In Romans 12:2 it is the mind, the *nous*, that is renewed. In Titus 3:5, it is directly associated with Baptism and Confirmation in the phrase *loutrou palingenesias kai anakainōseōs pneumatos hagiou.*

The verb *anakaino'o* occurs twice in 2 Cor. 4:16 and Col. 3:10. In the former instance it refers to the parallel process by which the external man disintegrates (life towards death) and the internal man (life that grows towards life) is renewed day by day. In Col. 3:10, it is a description of the new man that we are to 'put on' as Christians, the new man who is being renewed for recognizing and experiencing the God who has created it in His own image.

In Hebrews (6:6) the word *anakainizō* is used for the restoration of a fallen Christian to a state of repentance. This is the classical Greek word. *Anakaino'o* is peculiar to the New Testament. *Anakainizō* was used by classical writers to refer to the resumption of a war or to starting again something which had stopped temporarily. We use it in this sense when we speak about 'renewing a contract'.

But the New Testament word renew has a special meaning. Its origins go back to the Old Testament Hebrew verbs *Haddash* (חדש and *halaph* חלף).

Haddash is sometimes used in the simple sense of repair, or make usable again, as e.g. in 2 Chr. 15:8, where King Asa repairs the altar of the Lord and restores its use, or in Job 29:20 where his bow was in a constant state of repair, always ready for use (see also Is. 61:1, 2 Chr. 24:4, 12). It is also used, as in 1 Sam. 11:12 to re-establish the kingship.

Its more characteristic use, which has influenced St. Paul, comes in the Psalms and in second Isaiah. In Psalm 51:10, the sinner prays for the renewal of a *ruach nakon* (Heb. 51:12) a right spirit, within him. In Ps. 103:5, God renews the psalmist's youth like the eagle's. In Ps. 104:30, the Spirit, in a creative act, renews the face of the earth to make it bring forth fruit.

In Isaiah 40:31, those who wait upon the Lord renew their strength; the nations became bold to approach God when they renew their strength in Isaiah 41:1.

These are the main instances in which the word is used in the Bible. The general semantic direction of the word is towards restoration of the right relationship with God, with resultant boldness or inner strength and capacity to bear fruit in righteousness.

How does renewal come about in Church and society?

In Romans 12:2 we are told clearly: 'Do not be squeezed into the pattern of the age, but be transfigured by the renewal of the mind, in order that you may experimentally demonstrate what the will of God is—what is the concrete shape of the good, the acceptable, the adult way of life'.

Here two principles are opposed to each other—the first being an uncritical fitting in into the patterns of the present age, its mores, its values, its provisional goals and so on. The second principle is that of renewal of the mind or a fresh vision which leads to a fresh experimental demonstration of the answer to the philosopher's question about the nature of the good.

Here is the secret of renewal—in the ability to transcend and resist the conformist pressures of the age, to develop an ever fresh vision and constantly to revise the pattern of our experimental obedience to the will of God adapting it to our time and place.

The absence of renewal is when we drift with the times, with the currents of the secular world, with their moral and social assumptions. This is not simply a question of being open to the world, or having a dialogue with the world. Succumbing to the world and its values will not create renewal in the Church, though it may increase the volume of activity of the Church. It is only by being more truly the Church that we will contribute to the renewal of the world.

Historically, the word renewal has come into evangelical and ecumenical vocabulary as a substitute and corrective to the evangelical notion of 'revival' started by

John Wesley and still pursued as a goal by people like Billy Graham or Leighton Ford. Revival was an attempt to bring back to life the evangelical faith of baptized Christians. That is the way Methodism began in Britain and spread in America and elsewhere.

Parallel to the Wesleyan revival movements, there grew up also the Protestant missionary expansion. Again in our century John R. Mott popularized the word 'evangelization' as a term for foreign missionary activity.

The notions of 'revival' and 'evangelization' then coalesced and received a new and comprehensive meaning in the thinking of organizations like the WSCF, which included both Christian participation in politics and contributions to the life of the university as aspects of 'evangelism'. Only thus can we understand the title of Philippe Maury's book *Politics and Evangelism*.

Renewal, which in a sense, is a substitute for the evangelical notion of 'revival' thus takes on the additional meaning of exhorting or persuading Christians to take an active and creative part in the political, economic and social activities of local, national, or international structures. Here we see the shift from the personal emphasis of old-fashioned 'revival' to the social and structural emphasis of activist 'renewal'.

But in this shift, there is the same danger as was present in the Wesleyan emphasis on 'personal religion', which is today considered as merely a relic of 'pietism'. The social-structural emphasis is simply the other side of the personal, and not its alternative. We cannot choose between 'personal religion' and 'social religion' which latter today comes to be called 'religionless Christianity'.

The important point to keep in mind here is that unity and renewal are inseparable. We pray not just for the unity of the churches today, but for their renewal and unity.

III. *The Structural and the Personal*

Neither in society nor in the Church can we anticipate renewal by focusing only on the 'personal' or only on the 'structural'. Persons are created by the structures and structures are built up by persons. 'Pietism' and the 'Social Gospel' are not alternatives for the Church, but one-sided distortions of the Gospel. True renewal takes place only when the personal and the structural are held in fruitful tension with each other. A structural, individualistic fundamentalism with its emphasis on personal salvation exists today in all churches. Those who object to the Church being concerned about society, about peace and justice, about war and destruction, about racial hatred and economic cruelty, are actually fundamentalists who deny the central prophetic content of the Gospel.

But those who in the name of a Social Gospel, of secularization, of a religionless Christianity, deny the need for personal faith, personal prayer and a religion of the heart, are also denying one side of the central content of the Gospel, the free access of persons into the loving presence of the Lord. Aggressive denigration of the Church, romanticization of the world, lampooning personal religion and worship, and a preoccupation with social structures at the cost of personal holiness—these are the marks of a form of Christianity which has lost touch with the roots of the Gospel and seems incapable

of preparing the way for renewal in our world. This latter kind of sophisticated, *avant-garde* religion seems to be growing and gaining ground in the West, both among Protestants and Catholics. Many of us who come from outside western culture are tempted to regard this phenomenon as ambiguous at best. On the one hand, it is a reaction against an unjustified other-worldly preoccupation, and thus to be welcomed. On the other hand, this phenomenon seems to some of us as a consequence of the drying-up of the roots of the Gospel in the West as a consequence of material prosperity and the loss of contact with the transcendent. Some of us not only cannot regard this phenomenon as leading to renewal, but feel that this is a kind of liberalism which must bring another reaction resulting in an even more unhealthy fundamentalism than the one Karl Barth was able to popularise for a few decades.

IV. *Worship and Action in Society*

The way to unity in the Church therefore lies along the middle ground between renewal of the personal and of the structural, traversing the terrain of eucharistic worship and of loving service to fellowmen. Unity of the Church, and therefore of society, can come about only when the elements mentioned by St. Paul become realized in the Church and its fruits made available to society.

(1) *A new notion of authority and freedom:* St. Paul did not exercise arbitrary authority over his flock. He always addressed them as 'brethren' and appealed to them. He set an example for them to follow. The Church cannot claim any authority over its members in

terms of a *jus divinum* or a *jus humanum*. The authority of the Church must truly become apostolic—based on love and charisma rather than on law and legislation.

(2) *The renewal of eucharistic worship:* 'I beseech you, therefore, brethren .... to present your bodies a living sacrifice' (Rom. 12:1). The element of offering of our bodies, our lives to God, as instruments of his purpose in the world, as a temple for his presence among men, should be renewed in our worship. This is the source of true personal faith and prayer.

(3) *The courage to refuse to be squeezed into the patterns of our contemporary culture:* 'Do not be squeezed into the mould of this age. . .' (Rom. 12:2). Most of our theology and spirituality today seem cheap accommodations to the pressures that come from the economic realm. We have a responsibility to swim against the stream when necessary. Renewal will not come by an easy-going and comfortable adjustment to the pressures of society—whether it be for the spread of secularization, or for the growth of technocracy, for the de-religionization of man, etc. The inner fibre of the Church can be built up only by resistance to pressure.

(4) *Transforming vision and Experimental obedience of a pioneering kind of society:* '... be ye transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may demonstrate the will of God ...' (Rom. 12:2).

The Church needs to have the boldness to see the vision of God's purposes for mankind as a whole, and do pioneering and experimental work to provide patterns of obedience for the whole of mankind.

(5) *Willingness to accept temporary failure and not to have visible success in the world:* 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God. We are afflicted, but not crushed; perplexed but not driven to despair . . . always carrying in the body the death of Jesus. . .' (II Cor. 4: 7-10). This is the authentic spirituality of renewal, both in the Church and in society.

The churches, Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox, are still only on the threshold of the ecumenical age; none of us have truly entered the ecumenical movement. If we think we have, we are deceiving ourselves. The temptation to think that we have already become ecumenical is probably greatest among Protestants. They have been much too prone to regard contacts and co-operation with other Protestants and intercommunion with them as the major part of the ecumenical task. The Orthodox have not entered the ecumenical movement whole-heartedly, but they know that. Roman Catholics are quite new to the ecumenical movement and will require a considerable amount of time before they develop the proper sensitivities to enter the movement fully.

Renewal in our theology, in our spirituality and in our social action, can come about when the three great branches of Christendom are fully in an open relationship with each other, listening to each other with respect, praying together, and working together.

There is a good possibility today that we might all begin to enter the movement, though in none of the three branches of Christendom do we see leaders who have the degree of confidence in God which would enable them

to enter this risky realm of ecumenical relations without inhibition or reservation. The strategies of the leaders of all three branches seem much too parochial, placing the interests of one's own tradition above those of the one Church of God.

The same is true of the nations as well. No national leader exists today who dares put the welfare of humanity before the welfare of his own nation.

There was a time when we had a few such men in Church and society. It is a judgment upon humanity that Pope John, President Kennedy and Pandit Nehru were all taken away from our midst in the course of a single year or so.

The unity of the Church and of society still awaits men of that calibre, whose vision is bold and broad, whose faith in God is without limit, and who live and breathe for the sake of the whole of mankind.

I have dwelt very briefly on our need to pray for unity during this special week, taking care not to separate the four inseparables:

(*a*) Unity of the Church and the unity of mankind,

(*b*) Unity and Renewal,

(*c*) Personal renewal and structural renewal, and

(*d*) Renewal of worship and renewal of obedient service.

Ecumenism is not a matter of mere meeting together to engage in polite dialogue and then having a few

programmes of common action. Ecumenism is the mission of God in our time—not only for the Church, but for the salvation of the world.

But that requires all the four pairs being activated together. To that end let us continue in prayer, in the confident hope that He who has begun a good work among us will see it through to the end.

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH—GENERAL AND ORDAINED

I

What is the ministry of the whole Church? Attempts have often been made to define this task as 'unity, witness and service'. It is important to have some clarity about the total ministry of the Church before we can be clear about the task of the specially ordained ministry.

The difficulty with the unity—witness—service trilogy seems to be two-fold. First, it is practically impossible to make an adequately helpful distinction between witness and service. Service is witness and witness is a service. Secondly, the trilogy does not include that primary task of the Church, namely the worship of God.

The ministry of the Church in the world of history is to be a *koinōnia* of the Spirit in Christ for *eucharistia* towards God and *apostolé* in the world. All three aspects, fellowship, worship and apostolate, are equally important and integrally related to each other in any consideration of the ministry of the Church.

Koinōnia, often translated 'fellowship', actually means participation or communion. It is God's will and purpose that men should be in communion with God, participating in His 'divine nature', and at the same time with each other. This possibility and purpose of God

was actualized in Christ who, being man, is in total solidarity (and therefore communion) with all mankind, and as man, he made real in history the perfect communion between the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit in the eternal God-head.

Christ is thus the centre and focus of the *koinōnia* of men with God and with each other. It is 'in Him' that the *koinonia* subsists. He is its head, and it is His Body.

But this community of men with God and with each other is brought about in history by the work of the Holy Spirit, who takes what is of Christ and continues to make it real in time and space. It is in this sense that we speak of Pentecost as the birthday of the Church. The limits of the Church reach all the way back to Adam and all the way forward to the *parousia*. But on Pentecost, the Spirit was given in a special way to the community. Christ Himself is present in history in a new mode from that in which He was present before the Crucifixion and Ascension. He is no longer in history *kata sarka*, according to the flesh; but he is present *sōmatikōs*, bodily, through the *sōma Christou*, the body of Christ, whose living reality is the *Pneuma*, the Holy Spirit. Any separation between Christ, the Body of Christ, and the Holy Spirit would therefore be unthinkable to us. This is why the distinction between Christ and the Church can properly be maintained only when their inseparable union by the Spirit is also acknowledged in the same breath.

This makes it difficult for the Orthodox to conceive the ministry in the Church as somehow representing Christ as if He were absent. We cannot have a Vicar of Christ, since Christ himself is present in the Church.

Neither can we properly entertain the notion of Apostolic succession, since this notion entails the view that Christ left the Apostles after giving them a revelation and some authority, which revelation and authority the Apostles in turn transmitted to their successors.

The ministry of the whole Church cannot therefore be conceived in any sense as distinct from the ministry of Christ. The Church has a ministry only in so far as it is Christ's ministry, through the Body, in the Spirit.

He Himself is the Minister who exercises a central aspect of His total ministry through the whole ministry of the whole Church. In this whole ministry all take part alike; the distinction between clergy and laity do not hold at this level. By baptism all people—bishops, priests, deacons, laymen, laywomen, children—are incorporated into this ministry.

It is important to understand the distinctive role of baptism in relation to the ministry of the whole Church, for baptism is for the Orthodox not only a washing, but also an anointing, an ordination. It is not possible for us to administer baptism without also the anointing (Chrismation/Confirmation). To be incorporated into the Body of Christ by baptism means also that one participates fully in the offering of the Eucharist and in the 'mission' of the Church to be the temple of the living God in time and space.

In Baptism we are anointed as Kings and Priests (Rev. 1:6) to the Royal Priesthood. But this should not be misunderstood—as some of the Reformers seem to have done—in the sense that each Christian is a priest to his fellowman. The biblical teaching is that we share

corporately in the priesthood of Christ, which consists in the ministry of offering and intercession on behalf of the whole world. Priesthood should not be seen as primarily a ministry of the Word—that ministry belongs properly speaking to the pastoral or prophetic aspect of the ministry. The Priest's primary job is to stand in the presence of God on behalf of men.

By baptism we are all ordained to a participation in the continuing Eucharistic ministry of Christ before the Father. And this applies to all who are baptized, men and women, clergy and laity, infants and adults. That is why as soon as an infant is baptized, he is also anointed to the priesthood of Christ, crowned with the kingship of Christ, taken to the altar to process around it three times, and finally to take communion, all as part of a single act.

By baptism the infant is made a full member of the Body of Christ and enjoys all the privileges of the life of the Spirit that activates the Body. He does not wait for another act like Confirmation which confers on him privileges of membership.

By baptism all of us are also made participants in the ministry of Christ through the Spirit in the Body. Christ as the eternal *diakonos* works to serve the world with the ministry of preaching, teaching, healing, bringing the fruit of the Spirit into the world—love, joy, peace, patience, truth, etc. Christ also serves His Body the Church, through its members, making it a genuine *koinonia* of the Spirit.

In summary then the general ministry of the whole Church (clerical and lay) is to participate in the ministry

of Christ, which consists in the three elements (1) *koinonia-oikodome* building up the Body of Christ, (2) *eucharistia-leitourgeia* the worship of God on behalf of the world and (3) *apostolé—diakonia* or the prophetic and pastoral ministry in the world.

II

The second question is by far the most important ecumenical question today. If what we have said above is the general ministry of the whole Church, then what would be the specially ordained ministry's vocation?

There is quite a history of the discussion of this question in the Roman Catholic Church. Aquinas raised the issue in the *Summa Theologica* III:63. Luther sought to deal with it in the *Pagan Servitude of the Church* and in his treatise *On Abrogating the Private Mass* (Werke 8:420). Pius XI in his 1928 encyclical on the 'Sacred Heart' (*Miserentissimus Redemptor*) affirmed the priesthood of the faithful but did not quite manage to differentiate between the two. Pius XII, in *Mystici Corporis* (1943) stated that the faithful participated in the offering, but the Priest's prayer alone could make the Immaculate Lamb present on the altar. Four years later, the Pope tried to make this clear by making a very fine distinction between 'offering' and 'consecration'. The people 'offered'; the priest 'consecrated' (*Mediator Dei*). It is strange, however, that the Pope in his later years had to assert that the laity 'in no way represent the person of Christ, and are not mediators between themselves and God', and so 'can in no sense rightly possess priestly power'.

The Vatican Council II has sought to deal with this issue, but not very resolutely. The dogmatic constitution on the Church interprets the priesthood of the laity in the biblical terms of offering spiritual sacrifices and proclaiming the power of him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. Then it distinguishes between the general and the special priesthood in the following way:

> Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated. Each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ. The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, moulds and rules the priestly people. Acting in the person of Christ, he brings about the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of all the people. For their part, the faithful join in the offering of the Eucharist by virtue of their royal priesthood. They likewise exercise that priesthood by receiving the sacraments, by prayer and thanksgiving, by the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.

The Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church works mainly on the traditional lines, thinking of the episcopal college as a 'body' which succeeds to the 'College of Apostles' (para 4). The people of a diocese are defined as those 'entrusted to a bishop to be shepherded by him' (para 11). The decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests does better in that it reaffirms the priesthood of the faithful. It distinguishes the priests' priesthood by its ability 'by the sacred power of their order to offer sacrifice and to remit sins' (para 2).

But it also speaks of the 'apostolic succession' as the source of their ministry.

In thinking about the ministry, it is fatal to proceed to any sort of direct succession from Christ and the Apostles to the bishops and the clergy. The notion of 'Apostolic Succession' which has in recent centuries been brought up as a key issue in determining the Apostolicity and Catholicity of the Church has confused, not clarified the issue.

The difficulty in the notion of Apostolic Succession through a chain of bishops is a two-fold one: first it isolates the bishop from his flock and from the whole community; secondly it puts too much emphasis on the tactical element, or on the laying on of hands.

We know in the Orthodox Church that Apostolic Succession does not function as if it were a relay race, where one Apostle handed over 'the tradition' to one bishop, who then handed it over to his successor and so on. This has not actually happened anywhere. We do not hear that the Apostles gave private instruction to one particular man in the Church to whom he entrusted the whole Christian faith, while the rest had only part of the story. The Apostolic instruction was given to the whole community, not just to one or more specially chosen people. While Timothy was probably given a special commission by the Apostle Paul to 'preach the message, convince, reprove, exhort people with perfect patience and willingness to teach' (II Tim. 4: 1, 2) we see that he was already an instructed Christian, who probably got the foundations for his faith from his Christian mother and grandmother, and further instruction from the teachers at Lystra and Iconium. (Acts 16: 1 ff). Paul

wished to take him on with him when he was already well thought of by the community.

Apostolic Succession, if it exists at all, exists in the whole community of the faithful. The baptized share with each other the primary responsibility for the continuity of the faith and witness. The bishops fulfil a special role within the community and not apart from it, in their own person. This is why the Orthodox cannot regard the laying on of hands by a 'canonical' bishop as by itself conferring apostolic succession. We cannot regard the *epicopi vagantes* as having a 'valid' but 'irregular' ministry. The consecration of a bishop is itself the act of the whole Church, and not that of one or more bishops alone.

The bishop does not receive his ministry directly from the Apostles through a chain of bishops. He is called to it from within the Church, and it is conferred on him by the Spirit through the whole Church.

A World Council Study Consultation working paper on Patterns of Ministry (Geneva, September 1965) puts the 'special function and responsibility of the ordained ministry' in the following way:

> All Christians are called to represent Christ and the Church in their various ways in the places in which they are.
>
> The ordained ministry has however, in almost all traditions, the special function of representing the universal Church, in a distinctive and articulate way, to the local Christian congregation and to the world alike. We recognize with penitence that the perform-

ance of this function is obscured by the present divided state of the churches.

The ordained ministry has also a special responsibility for the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, and the pastoral oversight of the Church. In some instances ministers exercise this responsibility by doing these things themselves directly and exclusively; in other instances, their duty is rather to initiate them, to encourage others to do them and to supervise them.

This responsibility has most usually been exercised in the past within the context of a particular congregation or parish, diocese or pastoral district; today it must also be exercised in specialized ministries, at different levels in the Church and in terms of different structures.

Here the attempt is made to speak of the ministry, of the laity as well as of the specially ordained, as 'representing Christ and the Church.' The distinction between the ministry of the clergy and that of the laity is that the former is 'distinctive and articulate'. Does this imply that the ministry of the laity is undistinctive and inarticulate?

The Orthodox Church has not spoken officially on this question anywhere, and what is offered here is only a personal contribution. The distinction between the ministries of the clergy and the laity is as difficult to make as that between the heart and the whole body. The one cannot exist or function without the other. As the heart is an integral part of the body, so the ministry of the clergy is integrally related to the ministry of the whole Church.

Equally dangerous as the notion of 'Apostolic succession of bishops' is the notion of 'hierarchy' which has vitiated the discussion on the ministry in recent history. The word *hierarchia* seems to have been first used in the writings of Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite (end of 5th century?). In the two main works of Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy* and *The Ecclesial Hierarchy*, the word *hierarchia* in noun or verb form (*hierarcheo*) occurs some 200 times. Dionysius did not associate the concept of hierarchy with the notions of ruling or authority. That interpretation has accrued to the word in the course of its historical development at the hands of St. Maximus the Confessor, St. Andrew of Crete and George Pachymeres in the East, and Gregory the Great, Erigena, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura, Bellarmine as well as Eckhart and Tauler in the West. Two Eastern (Greek) doctors, Pachymeres and Maximus are responsible for introducing the notions of commanding and obeying into the concept of 'hierarchy'. For Dionysius the celestial hierarchy includes all the beings around the throne of God, and in the ecclesial hierarchy, not only the laity, but the catechumens and hearers seem to have been included. Hierarchy is a holy ordering for the service of God, a community in which the divine dynamic operated to draw all men towards *theosis* or union with God and the resultant transfiguration into the image of God. The hierarchy is the koinonia of the Spirit as a dynamic community and not the body of bishops.

Within this hierarchy, which includes the laity and in some sense the world itself, the bishop has a special place and function.

The Orthodox understanding of the role of the specially ordained minister has to begin with the understanding

of the episcopal office. The Vatican decree on The Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church defines the office of the Bishop in the following way:

> 'In this Church of Christ the Roman Pontiff is the succesor of Peter, to whom Christ entrusted the feeding of His sheep and lambs. Hence by divine institution he enjoys supreme, full, immediate, and universal authority over the care of souls. Since he is pastor of all the faithful, his mission is to provide for the common good of the universal Church and for the good of the individual churches. He holds, therefore, a primacy of ordinary power over all the churches'.
>
> 'For their part, the bishops too have been appointed by the Holy Spirit, and are successors of the apostles as pastors of souls. Together with the Supreme Pontiff and under his authority, they have been sent to continue throughout the ages the work of Christ, the eternal pastor. Christ gave the apostles and their successors the command and the power to teach all nations, to hallow men in the truth, and to feed them. Hence, through the Holy Spirit who has been given to them, bishops have been made true and authentic teachers of the faith, pontiffs, and shepherds'.

The Orthodox find this approach uncongenial for three reasons. First, it begins with the Bishop of Rome and then puts an 'also' for other bishops. Secondly, it does not speak about the High Priestly or Liturgical function of the bishop and puts too much emphasis on the teaching and feeding functions.[1] Third, it talks about autho

[1] This may be partly accounted for by the fact that the document is about only the pastoral office of the bishop and not about the episcopal office as such.

rity and rule, command and power, in a manner which seems to come more from a feudal society than from the notion of the community of the Spirit.

A better starting point for the Orthodox understanding of the ordained ministry would be the ordination liturgy of Hippolytus which witnesses to the conception of the episcopate in the second century. Though some Orthodox theologians would like to use the first Epistle of Clement of Rome as the starting point for the study of post-biblical developments, one finds here already the powerful impact of the Roman instinct for discipline and therefore the tendency to compare the Church to an army. But even in Clement one finds the true evangelical principle, 'Let each be subordinate to his neighbour, according to the charisma which he has received'. Clement is also the originator of the notion of Apostolic Succession, though for him the bishops were chosen because they were 'pioneers' and they had the testimony of the flock to be without blame, humble, peaceable and disinterested.

In fact Clement, the *Didache*, Hippolytus' ordination liturgy and Ignatius all bear witness to the fact that the bishop was both High Priest and Good Shepherd.

But is not Christ the only High Priest, who can never be replaced, since he is a 'priest *for ever* after the order of Melchisedek' who *'ever lives* to make intercession for us?' Is not Christ also the true Good Shepherd, who has laid down his life for the sheep? In what sense can we then speak of the bishop as High priest or Good Shepherd?

Is this not the kind of sacerdotalism leading to

clericalism, superstition and the obscuring of Christ's unique mediatorial function?

This is a crucial question in the ecumenical movement, which deserves to find more extended discussion. The tendency in the past has been to see the bishop (a) as a successor to the Apostles, or (b) as the link in a causal chain of mission (Trinity-Christ-Apostle-Bishop) by which the grace of God is mediated to the believer. As we have said, both these ideas tend to isolate the bishop from the community where he learned his faith as a child, where he grew up as a Christian and which he did not cause or create.

The relationship between Christ's unique vocation to be the Eternal High Priest and Good Shepherd and the bishop's vocation cannot be explained either in terms of a delegation of authority or a substitute representation. The axiom of Orthodox ecclesiology is that Christ shares everything with His Body. The unique High-Priesthood and Good-Shepherdness of Christ is shared by the whole Body of Christ corporately. Christ is present in the world through His Body, interceding for the world (which includes the Body) as High Priest, and caring for it as Good Shepherd. This presence of Christ in the Body through the Spirit is fundamental to understanding the place of the bishop in the Church.

This continuous presence of Christ in His Body is for us sacramentally expressed by the presence of the bishop and the college of presbyters in the midst of the flock. In the Liturgy as well as in an unceasing ministry of prayer, while the people of God as a whole fulfil the ministry of praise, offering, thanksgiving, intercession and communion, the bishop with his college of presbyters

serves in their midst as the sacramental presence of Christ the only High Priest. While in their daily lives the whole body of Christ fulfils the ministry of teaching, caring for and serving all men, the bishop with his college of presbyters serves as the sacramental presence of Christ the Good Shepherd in the midst of the ministering church.

The deacon serves a special function within this total ministry of the Body. He assists the High Priest at the altar and at prayer, and the Good Shepherd in his ministry of caring, teaching and feeding. He interprets the liturgy and the actions of the High Priest to the congregation, guides them in their own High Priestly ministry of intercession, and serves as a general link between bishop and people in the liturgy. Similarly the deaconal college becomes also the link between bishop and people in the pastoral or shepherdly ministry of teaching, feeding, caring, guiding, etc.

The priests or presbyters belong integrally to the diocesan episcopate as part of the episcopal college, and function both corporately and individually as High Priest and Good Shepherd on the authority of the Bishop and under his guidance. The major differences between the bishop and the priest are two: First, the priest functions on the authority of the bishop and as his delegate, and cannot further delegate his authority. The bishop functions within the diocese as its chief shepherd, and can delegate his functions to others, i.e. to other men chosen by the people and ordained by the Church under his presidency. The fullness of the Church is present when the bishop with the presbyterial college is in the midst of his people. This would not be the case with the priest.

Secondly, the bishop is a bishop of the Universal

Church and has a special function in relation to the sacramental expression of the unity of the whole Church which the priest does not have. He represents the whole of his flock in a universal, regional or national council in a way which the priest is not able to do. The synod of bishops thus gives sacramental expression to the unity of the Church, when they meet in the power of the Holy Spirit to consider matters affecting the whole Church.

A final word about Patriarchs and their role in the Orthodox Church. The impressive development of Papacy in the Roman Catholic Church has sometimes tempted the Orthodox Churches to regard the Patriarchate on the same lines as the Papacy. The word 'Patriarch' in the sense in which it is now used in the Orthodox Church is of comparatively late origin—perhaps the sixth century. It is most difficult to determine the origins and basis of the special authority vested in certain metropolitan bishops like those of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch recognized by the Council of Nicaea (325). Later theology has sought to relate their special position to the Apostles who lived and operated from these cities, but this does not fit the case of Alexandria as well as it does in the case of Antioch and Rome.

We know from the New Testament that after the beheading of James (ca 44 A.D.), the Apostles as a group moved to Antioch, and St. Paul and Peter operated out of Antioch as their headquarters, and only at the end of their lives moved out to Rome. Even tradition does not ascribe apostolic origin to the Church in Alexandria which seems to have been established by St. Mark the evangelist.

The special importance of the three sees, Rome, Alexandria and Antioch would be easier to understand on political rather than theological grounds. Rome was the capital of the Empire; Alexandria and Antioch were the two great provincial capitals. Just as in the protocol of the Empire, the ranks were in order (1) Emperor of Rome, (2) Prefect of Alexandria and (3) Prefect of Antioch, the ecclesiastical ranks came to be (1) Bishop of Rome, (2) Bishop of Alexandria and (3) Bishop of Antioch in that order. If it were for reasons of association with the chief Apostles, it is hard to explain why either Rome or Alexandria should come before Antioch or Jerusalem in rank. It is very difficult to demonstrate any connection for the Patriarchate of Constantinople with any particular Apostle; the connection with St. Andrew was brought in precisely because there was a need to explain the prominence of these sees in terms of some Apostles. But even if St. Andrew had something to do with Constantinople, it is hard to see why it should be more prominent than Corinth or Ephesus or Caesarea which have better grounds for connection with more prominent Apostles. It seems rather clear that the prominence of Constantinople begins only after the Imperial Capital moves there.

It seems then that the Patriarchal sees have their origins in administrative convenience rather than in some connection with a particular Apostle. Just as in matters of civic dispute appeal could be made over a local official's decision to the Prefect of Alexandria and Antioch, and where necessary, over their heads to the Emperor in Rome, the custom arose of ecclesiastical disputes being referred to the bishop of the provincial or Imperial Capital.

As an administrative convenience and for the unity and well-being of the Church, there arose also the need to have regional and provincial councils convoked by the bishops of the provincial or Imperial Capital. He may also have been the person who chaired the meetings of regional synods and communicated their decisions to all concerned.

This pattern may still be necessary in the ordained ministry of the Church as an administrative convenience. Feudal patterns, obsolete in secular society, should however not be continued in the Church. Perhaps new structures of administrative authority, with a very prominent role for the laity, are now being established in the Orthodox Churches.

The procedure followed by my own Church[1] in a recent election of five candidates for consecration to the episcopate indicates both that such patterns are being revised according to the needs of the times and that the total Church is beginning to recover its role in such ecclesiastical actions. The synod of bishops proposed twelve names to the diocesan councils from which they were to nominate five for the whole Church. The diocesan councils constituted of one priest and two laymen delegated by each parish in the diocese, went beyond the twelve proposed by the bishops and chose five. These names were collated by a central managing committee, and the list now came to some fourteen names, only half of whom were on the original list proposed by the bishops. The representative assembly of the whole Church, consisting of some 2000 laymen and 1000 priests

[1] The Syrian Orthodox Church of India.

delegated by the parish, together with the bishops made the final choice of five candidates by unanimous vote.

The way forward for the future unity of the Church seems to be by reconstituting the conciliar or collegial character of the whole Church, so that the ministry is the responsibility and task of all, and then to have a specially ordained ministry functioning in their midst, so that the whole Church may be filled with the gifts of the Spirit in order to fulfil its share in Christ's ministry as the only High Priest and Good Shepherd.

THE CULTIVATION OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Here I wish to draw attention to a problem rather than to solve it. The theme assigned to me is 'The cultivation of the Christian life'. May I first make four introductory propositions before attempting to chart the content and manner of cultivation of the Christian life.

I. *Introduction*

1. My first proposition is that the giving of priority in Christian thought and planning to the *mission* of the Church over the *life* of the Church is both contrary to the Scriptures and harmful to humanity.

In the last two hundred years or so, there has been a growing tendency to exaggerate the evangelistic task of the Church. The sending of missionaries to foreign countries, at first resisted by the Western Protestant churches, later became the thing to do for all churches. That great pioneer of the modern ecumenical movement, John R. Mott, cannot himself be exculpated from the responsibility for this gross exaggeration. The fact that words like witness, evangelism, and mission have now been ascribed a wider and more comprehensive meaning does not mitigate the situation. There is still too much emphasis on talking and acting, and too little on the

subtler qualities of life that have always made the Christian the salt of the earth.

Grace and Apostleship—I suspect Apostleship is the new word for mission. The word mission is hard to find either in the New Testament or in the Great Fathers and Doctors of the Church, or even in the Reformers. Its currency in Christian parlance happens to coincide with the mission of the West European powers to colonize and civilize the rest of the world. Not that there have not been great missionaries in every age and every clime in the Church. But they did not feel that everybody had to be a missionary; nor did authentic Christian missionaries ever try to colonize a mission field for generation after generation, refusing to leave or to stop bringing new missionaries once the Church had been established.

But let us begin with the New Testament. The Greek word for mission *Apostole* is used a total of four times in the whole New Testament—Acts 1:25, Romans 1:5, 1 Cor. 9:2, and Gal. 2:8. In each of these four cases it refers specifically to the ministry of the Twelve or of St. Paul, as distinct from the ministry of the whole Church. Only in Gal. 2:8 is the word translated 'mission' in English, but even here the meaning is clearly that of St. Paul's special calling to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. Being an Apostle was not everybody's business in the New Testament church. It required certain given qualifications which none of us today can aspire to. At least three can be mentioned here: (1) to have been a disciple of Jesus during his earthly ministry, (2) to have seen the Risen Lord with one's own physical eyes, and (3) to have been commissioned directly by the

Risen Lord to go and preach. St. Paul lacked the first qualification, and had to press his claims to Apostleship despite this disqualification, as we see from Galatians. 'Apostole' or Mission in that restricted sense appears a special privilege of a chosen few and not of the whole Church.

When we come to the verb *apostellein*—to commission, the picture would appear to be somewhat different. The verb occurs 133 times in the New Testament. But strangely enough 121 of these are in the Gospels and Acts, and only four in the Pauline writings (Rom. 10:5, 1 Cor. 1:17, 2 Cor. 12:17 and 2 Tim. 4:12). In none of these instances does it mean the whole mission of the whole Church.

The virtual absence of the words 'Commission' and 'Mission' in St. Paul's writings at least, should give us cause to reflect. Why does the greatest missionary of the Church's history fail to exhort the Christians to whom he writes to become missionaries? Why is what has become axiomatic tn western Christian thought, both Catholic and Protestant, namely that mission is the central task of the Church, apparently absent in St. Paul? We know that St. Paul was full of missionary zeal and the early Christians spread the Gospel with fervent earnestness. Was it then because it was superfluous that St. Paul did not exhort them to mission and witness? That seems a little difficult to believe. The centrality of the Cross and Resurrection or of the Grace of God, could just as well have been taken for granted by St. Paul. Yet he does dwell on these themes at some length. I suspect that the phenomenon is to be attributed more

to St. Paul's divine wisdom than to his taking it for granted.

To put over-emphasis on mission is to invite the danger of empty words, vain activism and hypocritical self-assertion. This was driven home to my mind during a conversation with a cultured and highly spiritual Hindu friend in India. 'Christ', he said to me, 'has a tremendous appeal to the people in India. If only those who bear his name were not so arrogant and self-assertive and so unlike their Master, India would be gathered at the feet of Christ'. That of course is an exaggeration. But for St. Paul at least, the life of the Christian community was more important than its conscious words of witness or missionary action. Take any of the Pauline epistles and examine the hortatory passages in them. Is he calling the churches to be witnessing communities or missionary congregations? The words he uses are significant. I mention only a few that the New Testament as a whole as well as St. Paul in particular uses rather frequently. *Hagios* = holy occurs 229 times in the New Testament of which 78 are in the Pauline epistles. *Zoe* = life and *Zao* = live occur 276 times, of which 96 are in the Pauline epistles. *Agape* = love, *Dikaiosune* = righteousness, *peripateo* = walk, *ginomai* = become, *apothnesko* = die, *ginosko* = to know, *kaleo* = to call, *kosmos* = world: these are some of his favourite words.

Even *evangelizo* (evangelize) and *martureo* (witness) do not occupy a central place in Pauline thinking. *Evangelizo* he uses 23 times, but in most cases referring to his own special calling and in no case as the responsibility of all Christians; *Martureo* 9 times, *marturia* and *martus* 9 times, but in none of these cases does it refer to the witness of

the whole Church or to the witness of individual Christians to Jesus Christ. In fact the manner in which we use the word witness is thoroughly un-Pauline. Quite often when St. Paul 'bears witness' to somebody, it is a weaker man whom he wants to support by his testimony.

Why have we today accepted a concept as central to our Christian thought which is central neither in St. Paul nor in the Fathers of the Church, nor even in the Reformers? With due respect and appreciation for the great accomplishments of the modern western missionary movement to which most of us owe our Christian faith, let me submit that there are two grave errors in that movement. In both respects the modern missionary movement departs from the practice of the Church. First, no previous missionary movement has used the practice of missionary colonization, either through foreign personnel or through financial controlling power. Secondly, no authentic missionary regarded his calling as a calling of all Christians. This was John R. Mott's big mistake, and our self-conscious emphasis on mission makes the Church an unbearable bore; when everybody regards himself as a missionary and a preacher the gospel gets cheapened and the Word loses its power. We Asian Christians seem to have been thoroughly brainwashed in this regard. We have acquired that dangerous missionary self-consciousness which leads to hypocrisy, sham and pride. We too have started bragging about the number of Asian missionaries sent out by the Asian churches. I may in my more sinful moments be all in favour of sending out some Asian missionaries to the West, if only to get even with them, as a sort of 'tit for tat'. But St. Paul never measured the spiritual vitality of a church by the number of missionaries it sent out.

The New Testament standards for a church are always the depth of faith, the binding quality of love, the steadfastness of its hope, the holiness of its life.

So my first introductory proposition is that the time has come for the Asian Church to be redeemed from this missionary brainwashing. An authentic mission can ensue only from an authentic Christian life of the community. The over-emphasis on mission is unscriptural and harmful.

2. My second introductory proposition is that the cultivation of the Christian life should be considered first in terms of the life of the whole Church, and only secondarily in terms of individual Christian lives.

The development of individualism in Christian spirituality cannot be attributed to Protestantism. It has its roots in the Egyptian Antonine monasticism; but it came to its full flowering in the medieval Roman Catholic piety of Belgium and Holland. When the eucharistic and ecclesial spirituality of St. Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite was assimilated and transformed by the great Saints of the Low Countries, what emerged was the profound but largely individualist spirituality of Gerhard Groote, Ruysbrooke and Thomas à Kempis. Dionysius was probably a Syrian and a Semite who could not think in individualist terms. For him spirituality was a matter of a community assembled around the unapproachable holiness of God's Person. It was in the eucharistic adoration of the celestial and ecclesial community that the beatific vision was to be found. No man or angel stood alone before God. There was no place to behold God except in the community of God's people on heaven and on earth. But when it was redeveloped

in Latin and Greek piety the 'mystical' vision became an encounter of the 'alone with the alone'. When this spirituality was combined with a distorted vision of Egyptian monasticism which searches for the salvation of the soul, the basis of modern individualism was already born.

The reaction to the dry post-Reformation Protestant scholasticism which took shape as Pietism was in its beginnings still a social movement. Zinzendorf and the Brethren of the Common Life were still not individualists. Early Pietism, by affirming the primacy of love over the correctness of academic theology, continued to maintain the emphasis on community. Even Luther, who developed the spiritual basis of individualism by his enunciation of the principle of private interpretation of Scripture, still held that the people of each princedom were to choose collectively for the Reformation.

In a sense the modern missionary movement brought this nascent individualism of the Western spiritual tradition fully into the open. Individuals started the missionary movement over against the Church. The gospel of the modern missionary movement was addressed to individuals. They had to choose, often over against the family and the community. The convert was separated from the community and placed in a ghetto.

There is of course a positive side to this individualism. The importance of the human person which is increasingly accepted as a secular value, has its roots in this individualism of the Western tradition. God has used the wrath of men to praise him. The value of the person before God is a genuinely Christian insight which had to

be clarified even at the cost of exaggeration and over-emphasis.

But my second introductory proposition is that the time has come to correct this over-emphasis, and that this can be done only by thinking first of the community and only then of the person of the individual in it. There may be the danger, as Mr. M. M. Thomas has pointed out, particularly in Asia, of the value of the person being overlooked in the interests of the collectivity. But the proper approach is always to keep the person and community together, with the primacy given to the community. In that sense the Asians may yet be proved right, if only they will learn to combine the value of the person with their present emphasis on the national community.

3. My third introductory proposition is that the cultivation of the Christian life, i.e. the life of the Church should be understood in the context of the sum-total of creation, rather than in terms only of the world of men.

It is a genuinely evangelical insight that the Church exists as a foretaste of and for the sake of the total human community. It is an equally important insight that the Incarnation is a historical event, and that history itself is to be redeemed.

But there is more than that to be said. Men are but part, be it ever the most important part, of the total of creation. And human history is but a small though significant page in the history of the cosmos.

Nothing less than the whole created order, the time-space universe in its entirety, stretching across billions

of years of time and millions of light-years of space, can be the object of God's love and redemptive activity. Our little planet, and this short 5000-year span of our human history, should be seen in the perspective of the whole universe, and in continuity with it. The formation of our little solar system in our little galaxy is an event in the life of the universe leading up to the Incarnation. But the Incarnation and the life of the Church have significance for the whole universe. It is God's will and purpose that the new man in Christ should be the mediator between the creation and the Creator.

This material element of redemption is what St. Paul has in mind when he says in Romans 8:19-21: 'For the yearning of the created order eagerly awaits the unveiling of the Sons of God. It was not because the created order wished it that it was ordained to emptiness but through Him who so ordained it but under hope (of better things), for it is a fact that the created order is to be freed from its enslavement to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.'

Whatever heaven may be, it must include a liberated and reconstituted material creation. This is one of the fundamental insights of the doctrine of the Incarnation. Matter has been assumed by the Logos, the Son of God, and is therefore redeemed. Matter is no longer opposed to Spirit, but becomes its field and raw material. This is why science and technology are already within God's plan of redemption.

The Church is like a tree planted on the earth. It is the planting of the Lord. The seed is Christ Himself—the seed that fell into the ground and died. 'Unless a

grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies it bears much fruit' (John 12:24). The Kingdom of heaven 'is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches' (Luke 13:19).

But this planting of the Lord, like other plants and trees, has to have roots in the earth to draw nourishment, and leafy branches open to the light of heaven. Both are equally essential to its life and growth. The cultivation of the Christian life cannot neglect either the rootage in the earth or the openness to light, without endangering that life. Rooted in the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the material reality of our daily existence, the Church grows by drawing nourishment from the life of the world, material and historical. Open to the light of God in Jesus Christ, the Church draws in the energy of the Son in eucharistic worship and private prayer. If worship is without roots in the life of the world, the tree fades and dries up. But if openness to the sun is shut off as may be the case in modern secularism, the tree withers away and dies.

The Church cannot be so concerned about the world as to neglect its own life of worship and prayer. Neither can it so devote itself to prayer and contemplation as to neglect the life of the world.

This unity of matter and Spirit is best expressed in the writings of that great French savant, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin in his two important books *The Phenomenon of Man* and *Le Milieu Divin*. He seeks in his own words 'to reconcile, and provide mutual nourishment for the love of God and the healthy love of the world, a

striving towards detachment and a striving towards the enrichment of our lives' [1].

De Chardin is bold enough to say, and to pray, that the work of 'our minds, of our hearts, and of our hands—that is to say our achievements, what we bring into being, our *opus*' will also be in some sense 'eternalised' and saved. And that boldness remains yet to be acquired by all churches, Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox.

It is natural for us to rail and cavil at our own activism, at our own organizational bureaucracy, at our own multiplicity of programmes and projects, at the rushed pace of our lives, at the restlessness of our souls. These are somewhat new phenomena which perplex and frustrate us, for we seem unable as yet to cope with them without losing our inner tranquillity. Some would counsel us to go back to the glories of a mythical golden age, when everybody was spiritual, peaceful and profound. Alas! God has placed us within the inevitable flow of time and there is no way back. It is idle to dream of a revival of pre-technological civilization. Man, especially Christian man, stands inescapably confronted with this bewildering new world, with the challenge to find a new spirituality in this new world which offers us no easy place of rest.

And yet man has to do much more than adjust to the new. He must learn to find his own true being within the new situation. Our generation is in that burdensome position of having to pioneer for a totally new world; to discover the shape of a new obedience.

[1] *Le Milieu Divin* (Fontana), p. 53.

Matter must be drawn into the realm of the Spirit. This has been the calling of man since his creation. Yet matter, in the eloquent words of de Chardin 'is the burden, the fetters, the pain, the sin and the threat to our lives. It weighs us down, suffers, wounds, tempts and grows old. Matter makes us heavy, paralysed, vulnerable, guilty. Who will deliver us from this body of death? But at the same time matter is physical exuberance, ennobling contact, virile effort and the joy of growth. It attracts, renews, unites and flowers. By matter we are nourished, lifted up, linked to everything else, invaded by life. To be deprived of it is intolerable'[1].

How to harness this power of matter so that it is no longer a drag and a burden but a spur and nourishment —that is the spiritual question of our time. We do not need today a spirituality divorced from the conflicts and struggles of living with earthly things. These poetic words of de Chardin contain a spiritual depth which the Church has yet to plumb. He addresses matter:

> Matter, you in whom I find both seduction and strength, you in whom I find blandishment and virility, you who can enrich and destroy, I surrender myself to your mighty layers, with faith in the heavenly influences which have sweetened and purified your waters. The virtue of Christ has passed into you. Let your attractions lead me forward, let your sap be the food that nourishes me; let your resistance give me toughness; let your robberies and inroads give me freedom. And finally let your whole being lead me towards God.[2]

[1] *Op. cit*, p. 106.
[2] *Ibid*, pp. 110-11.

All of history, and the physical universe, are to be redeemed. No true cultivation of the Christian life can afford to ignore this.

4. My fourth introductory proposition is that the cultivation of the Christian life has to be conceived in terms of death, resurrection and the last judgment.

Death, of course, is an embarrassing subject for our modern civilization. Particularly in those countries where the cost of dying is rising higher than the cost of living and the undertaker is at the top of the affluent society, death has to be embalmed, romanticized, covered up in expensive caskets and decorated with lilies and roses.

Yet death is a fact to be faced, and a power which has been conquered, though in a sense different from the Undertakers' Association concept of the conquest. We must all die.

The concept of a 'Responsible Society' is not meant to cover the whole area of the Christian faith. Yet it is a temptation for the ecumenical movement to give it so central a place in our thinking as to overshadow and obscure the eternal life aspect of the gospel. 'Responsible Society' as a category for describing the task of the Christian Church cannot deal with the problem of death. We know that this world is to go up in flames, and no society, however responsible, can expect to give life to dead men, or to survive the final conflagration. There is a real danger in our time of the Social Gospel, of the old and discredited liberalism of an earlier decade of our century, dominating our Christian thought in such a way as to eclipse the transcendent and obscure the issue of death. Especially in Asia, but also elsewhere in the

world, the emphasis on social relevance, on understanding the tides of history, on nation-building, on social and political activity directed towards the centres of power, and our science and technology can obscure the problems of the death of the individual, of the impermanence of history, and of the eschatological nature of human existence.

What happens to men who have developed a high level of social and political responsibility, when they are confronted with personal death, as every individual human being must be confronted at some point in his life? What happens to the human person whose spirituality has been developed almost exclusively in the context of social and political responsibility when he ultimately dies and his physical body disintegrates? The cultivation of the Christian life has to face this question also if the Christian message is to be fully relevant. The gospel is the gospel of victory over death, and in Christ, there is more than new social-political life.

So much by way of introduction. We must now enter into the content of the Christian life and the manner of its cultivation.

II. *The Content and Manner of the Christian Life*

Let me state in a sentence what I regard as the content of the Christian life, and say a few words to explain it.

The Christian life, coming from the grace and peace of God, is a life of faith in Jesus Christ, where the Holy Spirit creates joyous freedom in the community of suffering love, led by the transcendent hope of Resurrection

and final victory and where wisdom and power are developed to the full for the manifestation of God's glory.

One could speak for hours on every phrase in that sentence, but we shall seek here only to dwell on some main points:

1. *The Vocation of Man:*

The calling of the Christian Church cannot be understood except in the context of the vocation of man as man. 'The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever' says a Calvinist confession.

This is in general agreement with the ancient tradition of the Church though that tradition prefers to begin from the biblical assertion that Man is made in the image of God.

Image here means more than resemblance. The Greek words used by the New Testament and the Fathers is *eikon*. 'Jesus Christ is the *eikon* of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation' says St. Paul (Col. 1:15). The passage continues: 'He is the head of the body, the Church, he is the principium, the first-born from the dead'.

Jesus Christ does not merely resemble God. He is God physically present in the created order. An Icon is the concrete and proximate presence of an invisible or distant reality—not simply a photograph or a reproduction which can be an aid to memory. Man's vocation is to be in the image of God, as created. He is to be, in Jesus Christ, the physical presence of God in the universe. This is the vocation which Christ fulfilled and continues to fulfil through His Body.

The calling of the Church is to be this icon, or physical presence of God within the created order. Any spirituality oriented merely to the salvation of the soul, to the beatific vision, to political and social responsibility, or to witness and service, would go wrong if it does not start from this point. The being of the Church cannot be separated from its doing or talking, but that being must be regarded as primary and basic to all doing and talking.

But what does it mean for the Church to be the physical presence of God in the created order? It means nothing less than the social and corporate embodiment of all that God is. His glory is the only standard for man. And we all come short of it, as St. Paul says in Romans 3:23. There is no static nature of man which can be called good or evil, righteous or sinful. The nature of man is joyous freedom—it is not bound by anything, even by his creatureliness. God has 'crowned man with glory and honour, putting everything in subjection under his feet' (Heb. 3:7-8). This is the eschatological vocation of man, fulfilled in Christ, but only invisibly and mysteriously realized in the life of the Church and of mankind.

2. *The Glory of Man:*

But what is this glory? Is it sitting on a jewel-studded throne, wearing a triple tiara, with a company of sycophants singing man's praises all around him? That is the great misunderstanding of glory. That is the error of triumphalism.

The glory of God, as it manifests itself in man in

history, is to be expressed in basically the same way as Jesus Christ manifested it.

'Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee'. What was this hour of Jesus' glory? The hour of the Cross! The Cross is the climax of a life of glory of which Jesus said 'I glorified Thee on earth, having fulfilled the task Thou didst give me to do' (John 17:4).

In manifesting through rejection and revilement, the love, the wisdom, and the power of God, Jesus glorified God on earth. And our task is the same. To accept suffering, rejection and unpopularity, infirmity and contempt, and in that context to acquire God's wisdom as Jesus did, to develop God's healing and life-giving power as Jesus did, and to manifest God's gracious love as Jesus did.

This wisdom, this power, and this love did not come to him automatically by virtue of His being the Son of God. He accepted the limitations of manhood, and his first traces of wisdom and power and love were imparted to him by his mother, who fed him and nourished him, who taught him his first lessons and gave him that infinite mother-love, without experiencing which no human being can learn to love.

Yes, that is where the cultivation of the Christian life begins; in the simple love, joy and peace of the family. The spiritual life is not some energy transmitted by direct cables from heaven into the heart of each soul, but comes through the normal channels of our daily life as well.

But Jesus did not develop his power, his wisdom and his love from the family alone. The New Testament

gives us few clues in this regard but already by the age of twelve, he is in the company of devout Jewish scholars, learning from them and often teaching them. Later he must have joined a monastic community. There is every possibility that he spent the springtime of his youth in the Essene communities along the Dead Sea coast where he developed in community his own power, wisdom, and love and imparted it to others. Of course, he had to disagree with them and part company, but yet he was no doubt trained in that framework.

3. *The Place of Prayer:*

If there is one thing that is clear about the mysterious private life of Jesus, it is that he was a man of prayer. He could continue all night in prayer to God—and that is a feat which is acquired only by prolonged discipline and practice. Yes, the Son of God so limited Himself to be the Son of Man that he had to learn the life of glorifying God through channels open to every human being, and not by *fiat*, by simple virtue of his miraculous divine power, but by the power which is available to all men and which is in fact the sign of authentic humanity. That is the difficulty of 'proving' the deity of Jesus by the miracles. You do not have to be God in order to perform miracles. Every religion on earth can produce authentic miracles, which do not prove the deity of the miracle-worker. The New Testament speaks of the working of miracles as one of the gifts of the Spirit given to men in the Church.

This is not a digression. Prayer is the lost art of the Church. Modern man cannot pray. Even his intercessions become either pious propaganda for particular

causes, designed to remind the people of these needs rather than to place them before God in faith. Our technical age has brought two new obstacles in the way of prayer. First, we have developed our academic consciousness to the point where we cannot believe what we, or some learned scientist on our behalf, cannot understand. And the scientist cannot see how prayer can have any effect on the course of events which are guided by laws other than that of prayer. We seem to have discovered these scientific laws by the experimental method, though many things remain embarrassingly obscure to our vision in the causal network. But with our academic minds trained to seeing reality operating according to laws other than that of prayer, we find it difficult to believe in the efficacy of prayer. The only possibility is to hope that prayer will have a 'psychological' effect. Fortunately psychology is still a highly inexact science, and we secretly hope that it will not become too exact and rule out the possibility of prayer being explained by some vague phrase.

The second difficulty in prayer has been most illuminatingly pointed out by Martin Buber in his work *On the Eclipse of God.* This is a penetrating insight indeed. Modern man, especially the academically well-trained man, has his self-consciousness so highly developed, that it becomes a problem to him. Just as he begins to pray, he becomes aware of the fact that he is praying, and this self-conscious awareness comes between his consciousness and God, thus eclipsing God. It is a very ancient insight of the spiritual tradition of Eastern Christianity that self-consciousness is the great enemy of prayer. Prayer requires the willingness to lose ourselves in God. Modern training teaches us never to lose ourselves, for error is

the great enemy of science and a fully alert mind alone can guard against this enemy. Truly to pray is to experience a kind of death of the consciousness. The rational prayers of western collects, beautiful and sublime in their thoughts, cannot often lead men to this confident and trusting surrender to God which is the better part of faith—both in our corporate worship and in our private prayer.

Prayer is the means by which the image of God is imprinted on the life of man, as individuals and in community. Prayer is the secret of freedom, of wisdom, power and love. Prayer makes man authentically man in the image of God.

God said, Let there be light, and there was light. God's word creates reality. Man's word of prayer must become a creative word. He must develop his wisdom, his love and his power to such an extent that his ardent desires expressed in articulate prayer or inarticulate groanings, should create the object of those desires. But those desires should first conform to the general plan and purpose of God. Man's usual desires are not always in consonance with the purpose of God. Freedom in Christ means deliverance from the usual selfish and anxious desires of man, and the development of the power to pray. Very few of us have moved out of the kindergarten of prayer.

4. *A Place to Stand:*

Man stands upon the emptiness of creation. He has emerged out of the creative evolution that is the ongoing process of this time-space cosmos. The freedom that inheres in [illegible] creation by the gift of God, through the

inter-play of chance and anti-chance factors, has given birth to our solar system, our planet, and life on our planet. Out of this tree of life, which has again grown up through the play of chance and anti-chance factors, has been produced this strange two-legged animal called man, continuous with the material creation, plant and animal life, but endowed with a consciousness capable of infinite development.

The process of evolution, initiated by God, operates through the factors of mutation which produce variety. It works through large masses which provide infinite variety and the possibility of selective survival through the surge of life which manifests itself as the urge to reproduction, and finally through the elimination of the unselected through decay and death.

With the emergence of the consciousness of man, a new principle has been brought into play, in this vast process of creative evolution. De Chardin's great book, *The Phenomenon of Man*, is an exciting elucidation of this point. Man is still part of the great surge of creative evolution, and as such is subject to the play of the forces and factors operative in the process. But he is more than merely subject. He is called upon, not simply to be a passive object to be moulded by that process, but to rise up on his two feet, to take hold of that huge and infinitely powerful creative process, and to mould it. From within the material that is being moulded, by God's grace, has now risen a moulder.

To emancipate oneself from the bondage to the turbulent forces of Creation, to reflect upon and understand these forces, and then to mould them in accordance with the general purpose of God, transmuting the whole pro-